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See, Isaac M.

The rest of faith

To G. L. Clark

from the Author

July 1871.

THE
REST OF FAITH.

BY
REV. ISAAC M. SEE,

MINISTER OF THE REFORMED CHURCH.



NEW YORK:
W. C. PALMER, JR., 14 BIBLE HOUSE.
1871.

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PREFACE.

“THE REST OF FAITH.” Yes, let the book be called by that name. For that is the blessed condition of the “little ones” of the Lord Jesus. They have found the rest which is “*left*” “to the people of God.” So resting by faith, both injunction and promise are fulfilled in them — “Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

If the Lord Jesus will use these pages for His own glory, and by them draw souls unto Himself in full salvation, I can only be filled with Hallelujahs.

Let the reader ask the dear Lord to save him from reading as a critic, and to enable him to read with the inquiry, “How much of Jesus and His work may I have?” If the reader be already in the

rest of faith, I know him well. He may see incompleteness in style or mere expression, but he will love the doctrine. Such an one will pray that the book may be used by The King and Head over all things to the Church for the furtherance of His work. It is my comfort, that God can use these pages for that glorious work. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence."

Glory be to The Father, and to The Son, and to The Holy Ghost. Amen.

I. M. S.

Feb. 23, 1871.

INTRODUCTORY.

HOW HAVE YOU BEGUN?

MANY failures of Christians come from a wrong commencement of their religious life. Their need is not only a general consecration, but one that is particular and specific. *Everything for God.* All they have, to be marked "*for Jesus.*" Their whole selves to be stamped "*The Lord's alone.*" And they should live in the continual consciousness that what they have done stands fast. On God's altar, they are to remain upon it — their hands must not again touch the gift they have placed there.

Were this the case, how little trouble they would have. Their little all would be God's to keep; His, to preserve according to infinite wisdom; His, to increase or diminish; and they themselves as little children in His hands — little children never to grow out of His hands, but to grow more into them. For this is a mark of spiritual manhood. It does but get more childlike and simple, more content with God's ways, more desirous to be led

by Him, and that all our concerns may be nothing to us, save as they may be used for His glory.

No need then for Christians to become angry at injuries — they would be sweetly conscious that their blood is precious in His sight. No need to stand up for their reputation against malicious offenders. No need then to be putting *self* forward. Oh! what a hidden monster is little self! It is only little indeed, and herein is seen its greatness as an enemy to the soul. It is a little thing to be seeking to advance, a mean thing to set forward, but when set forward a devil to destroy and tear down, and annihilate everything noble, and pure, and holy. No, in a true and complete consecration, self would be given to God and left on His altar to be consumed in His service. May we not safely say that all difficulties arising in churches or in communities come from an undue *attention to self*. But God sees this, and has distinctly ordered that self shall be laid down at His feet. It is this which marks the new creature. Old things were full of self. The “new things,” therefore, are rightly supposed to be free from self. Where in reality they are not so, there must either be fearful *deception* or fearful *ignorance*.

And there is danger of both these in the Church. Many church-members may be deceived. It is not at all improbable, in the judgment of charity, that some are. While professing to be on the way

to heaven, they are sooner or later to awake in the awful condition of the lost. For they are building up self when they ought alone to serve and honor the Lord Jesus; harboring anger, making their reputation more than their Christianity; loving the creature more than the Creator; parleying with sin every day, and holding familiar converse with sinners and rejecters of the Lord Jesus Christ. Reader, is this your condition? Do not, then, complain that you find it *hard* to believe. While rolling sin under the tongue, and living in oneness with a gay world, it is *impossible* to believe.

We say therefore to all, let the foundations of religious life be well laid. Christ the rock on which we build, and the whole *for* Christ. Life, property, body, soul, spirit, time, circumstances, built upon Christ and for his glory. And Christ not as a holder of us merely, but Possessor, Author and Finisher of our faith, and supreme Authority of our lives. Beloved youth in the service of the Lord, new-born new creatures, be this the rule of your life, the safeguard for the future, the exceeding joy of your service, of your giving,—“NOTHING WITHOUT JESUS.” No pleasure without Jesus! No money without Jesus! No companions without Jesus! “Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him; where there is

neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free ; but CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL."

HALF-WAY TO CHRIST.

This sentence has been staring me in the face from a paper which lies on the table before me — "Half-way to Christ is a Dangerous Place." And it is so because those who occupy such a position must fail of having the benefit of His death. There is but one mode of receiving the full result of His work and His mediation. "All things are possible to him that believeth." It is by simple faith. In the Fulton-street prayer-meeting, a petition somewhat like this was read : "Please pray for one who prays for himself, but he cannot find the way to Christ." It was proposed that they should sing, and that any in the room in the condition of that young man should join in singing, and come to Christ while singing the following verse :

"Just as I am thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because thy promise I believe ;
O Lamb of God, I come, I come !"

When anxious souls stop short of this work of full belief in the power and willingness of Jesus to receive them and purify their hearts, they leave themselves just inside the pale of the world. Some have entered the Church only half-way be-

lieving Christ. They were taught that no man could cease from sin, and so they have believed and confessed themselves "sinners," and the world has charmed them more and more as such, until outsiders say of them, that these church-members are no better than themselves. It may well be thought that such are in a very fearful state ; for if outsiders go to perdition, those in the Church must have their suffering enhanced from the fact that they were so near Christ without ever discovering the virtue of His blood.

"Half-way to Christ !" It is the condition of sorrow, of doubt, of distress.

It is just the position in which Satan loves to have and to keep the Church, for it robs God of His rightful service ; it garnishes the wickedness of the world and makes it respectable ; it helps to induct young professors of religion into a life of practical unbelief ; it fosters those bad habits from which professors say there is no possibility of a cessation, because the habit has grown upon them so long. Oh ! the shamelessness of unbelief ! As if Jesus had no power to cure bad habits and make a cleanly Church ! As if His saints must be bound in chains of slavery to that which makes them unpleasant and unprofitable servants !

Beloved Christians, there is a cure for such only in the wounds of Christ. Let such as have been living "half-way to Christ," strip themselves of all

their conceit, and false hope, and carnal security, and worldly ambition, of all their friends and possessions, and lay these all down at Jesus' feet, that they may be clothed alone with His robe, and show forth alone His glory, and live entirely for Him. *All the way to Christ is full salvation, and at the greatest distance from the world.* "I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified unto me." This latter condition is most happy. It does not depend upon the husks of the world for comfort, but lives on the luxuries of the king's palace, the "things which are freely given to us of God," the things of God's marvellous light, the things of Christ, the "things which eye had not seen nor ear heard, nor had entered into the heart of man."

IS THE CHURCH AN HOSPITAL?

We have heard that a certain divine once said that the Church is an hospital where the inmates are all sick. When they get well they are taken to heaven. The person speaking may have believed it, but we believe that the sentiment is of the devil. That is just what Satan wants the Church to believe concerning herself, so that she will keep her bed, and do nothing to save a lost world. If so, the pastors of the Church are her chief nurses, sick themselves, and her theological seminaries are composed of sick nurses teaching

some of the sick to nurse their brethren. Then, too, the churches that are scattered here and there through the land are only infirmaries where people come to be treated by the Great Physician, who proceeds to cure the people by a slow process, in the meantime leaving them to the oversight of these sick ministering nurses.

The Church is not an hospital. It is the saved community of the King's children ; it is the peculiar people of a great High Priest ; peculiar in strength of endurance, in dependence on God, in holy boldness before Him, in attendance at the throne of grace, and in carrying the message of Jesus to lost sinners, and that with a power to which the world is a stranger. It is the place of the blessed and omnipotent Comforter and Guide, and Commander of our souls, who leads the people forth to conquest and a crown.

The work of Christ, and the whole economy of redemption, was conceived in infinite wisdom, executed in unsearchable love, and resulted in strength to the lost and heavenly cure of all their maladies. It may be that many church-members are not delivered from the ritualism of social life, from the common forms of commercial dishonesty, from covetousness which is idolatry, from evil habits of anger, and unholy worldliness. Such, surely, are either spiritually sick or spiritually dead, but their

condition does not meet the design of God in the redemption of man, nor are they to be counted as true members of Him who said, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

THE REST OF FAITH.

CHAPTER I

LET the inquirer after holiness begin free from these errors. His greatest need is to be hid in Christ, and therefore at the outset he is to let all go for Jesus. Suffer me to repeat, LET ALL GO FOR JESUS. This is

CONSECRATION,

— a complete, final yielding up of all we have to God, to be succeeded by a continual remembrance that we possess nothing henceforth in our own name. The reader will see at once the difference between everything being at God's disposal, and our holding it so. He is the Sovereign, and doeth what He will with His own, but men do not always acknowledge Him as such. Professing Christians have often confessed that they could not say without reserve, "Thy will be done." But anything short of an entire surrender to God is fatal to our life in Christ. He must have all, because He cannot do anything with you while you

desire to keep back a part of yourself or of your goods.

For anything you set your heart upon is an idol, and it cultivates "covetousness, which is idolatry," thus keeping you most effectually in such a state that He can do no mighty work within you. This demand for a consecration to the full measure of your light is not an arbitrary rule of tyranny, but the necessary outgoing of pure love. God desires to bless you, and you can only enjoy a delightful sense of His presence when you know that He is your supreme good. Will you see to it then that you have made an unreserved surrender to him?

One difficulty to be encountered is a certain very plausible argumentation on the self side. "How can I be sure that I have given up my darlings to God?" "How can I now place myself in the position of one who has lost them, and thus know that I am willing that they should be taken from me?" In these and the like questions Satan gets advantage, and makes souls think they cannot consecrate, or that it is useless. But we can know that we are willing God should have His way. We can be fully assured that we earnestly desire His control of all the circumstances of our lot, and that we do depend on His grace for all contingencies that may arise.

Having this knowledge, Jacob continued with the Lord. "Let me go," said He. "I will not

let Thee go except Thou bless me," answered the determined patriarch. Now Jacob well knew Who was dealing with him. He knew that he might come off disjointed from the vigorous grasp of this mighty "Angel of the Covenant." But what cared he? He gave his whole body into His hands. Had the Lord (for He was none other) asked, "Shall I maim you?" we can easily imagine Jacob answering, "Yes, Lord; do anything to me that will bring me into closer union with Thee, and make me more like Thee, and which will help me to be ready for the full communication of Thy power to save."

If we would have such full salvation, our whole being must be given into the Lord's hands, with a holy (not reckless) carelessness as to what disposal He shall make of us, or of any of our darlings, or of our treasures.

Beloved, to speak with deepest reverence, God must be the Chief Object of our love. "Whom have I in Heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth whom I desire besides Thee?" The true love of God transcends all other loves. It is such as finds the Chief Love left when all others are buried. Strange that any should usurp its place! Our allowance of such an anomaly should make us afraid that we have never tasted the love of God at all. For if He be our "One altogether lovely," His utmost wish will be cheerfully com-

plied with. Such a full compliance is the true meaning of consecration. This view may cause you to say, "Then I have no religion." Beloved reader, let us entreat you to pursue the subject until you are sure that you have "pure religion and undefiled before God." Be deeply humbled if you are not thus consecrated, and do not rest until your doubts are entirely gone. An uncertainty in religion is infinitely worse than a bad title to earthly property.

True consecration, by a thorough yielding to God of all we have, and are, and expect to be ; of our time, past, present, and future (we say past time, for there are many who secretly wish for a return of past surroundings), settles all questions in favor of the full control of God in all the concerns of our life ; and in favor of His regulation, as to time, place, and manner, of all the circumstances connected with them. We thus become as little children, whose all is in their parents, and from thence also their confident expectation of supply, of protection, and hearty love.

Just here is rest, and only here. It is the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Such rest from all anxiety, fear, and woe follows, because we have nothing to care for but the love of God in Christ, which is the sweet anxiety of the heavenly Church.

We are full well aware that many smile at this

unearthly simplicity, and that many are ready to question us upon the probable condition of the world if every one should take the same course. Where would the great men, where the rich, be found ; and who would rule the world ? These questions would be triumphantly met by a generation of Christians like Mary, sitting at the feet of The Great Redeemer and Sovereign of the world. It would be like Adam in Eden, for all he had was God's ; but full salvation from sin through the Blood of the Lamb, though it may want some of the peculiarities of Adam's condition, is yet better than Eden. Praise ye the Lord.

Ye souls that are burdened, careworn, and "wondering where the scene will end," here is rest, at Jesus' feet. When you are not your own but His, when you let Him in to cast each worthless idol out, and to cast out all that offends Him, He will take care of His own ; He will do what you desire of Him. He will give you rest from those severe inward struggles in which too long you have sought to be your own deliverer, or partially such. God shall cause you always to "triumph in Christ," both over foes within and without.

This is a rest in His will. You desire nothing outside of that ; you are conscious of its preciousness to your soul ; you are grounded in the love of it as the measure of all things affecting your whole being.

It is a rest in His providence. There is no leaping over that gracious superintendence, nor is there any desire to do it. The soul learns, in whatsoever state it is, therewith to be content. A crust with Christ is better than the feasts of kings, and prisons prove palaces. "December's as pleasant as May," and there are no "miserable days." His especial guidance is as real to your consciousness as the hand of a parent leading his child.

It is a rest in the authority of His word. "To the law and to the testimony," saith the soul. 'This decides questions at once, without any reasoning from personal, or public, or social considerations.

It is a rest in the prevailing power of His indwelling Spirit. We know that He can and that He does turn out His enemies and ours. With confidence we look to Him for the continual energy which shall lift us above the vain world and all it holds. We are assured that our desires to be God-like are granted in the measure of our capacity, nor do we believe that He will rest in His work. It shall go on "perfecting holiness."

Here is rest in praises, in activities for God, for which under the old life we found no time or inclination. Life itself becomes a "doxology of praise." The difficulty with most is that they are not willing to give over everything into the hands of God. They say it cannot be done; but this is because they do not want to do it. They want to

keep their business, they desire to command their own supplies, they would choose their earthly enjoyments, they cannot put their riches under the control of God, they crave even just a little honor. Therefore they cannot enter into rest. This is the standing and stubborn objection to the higher Christian life of which I write. They cannot "look unto Jesus with a single eye," and keep their earthly all, for self.

Consecration is not only a passive acknowledgment of the right of the Lord to all we have. It is, as we have already seen, an active casting of all our energies into the work of God. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a *living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Our all to God, our all with Jesus, our life to be with Him in the precious YOKE OF HIS SERVICE.

Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." But you ask Him, "Who shall be in this yoke with me? I cannot work with every one, even though I might love every one." Be still, soul! Do not be too quick to commit yourself to error. Can you not be in the yoke with Jesus Christ? He bore the yoke for you, when you could not even have stood near. "His disciples forsook Him and fled." But the Eternal Spirit was

with Him then, and in that glorious Paraclete He obtained a comforter for His disciples of all ages, to the end of the world. The Yokefellow who strengthened Jesus to bear the cross, now is the continual attendant of Jesus in the fulfilment of the promise, "I will be with you always." And now Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you." He puts us in with no other, other than Himself. He is the meek and lowly One with whom we are to work, and by whom we are to pattern.

If in the yoke with Jesus, our work shall look like His work, and, amazing thought, He will own our work as fully acceptable to Himself. Is it possible that any are desirous to get out of the yoke of Jesus, or that any who profess to be His are doubtful about the easiness of His yoke? Jesus says, "Come unto me." He means, "Believe in me, trust in me ; by believing fasten yourself to me, that you may be with me and I with you forever." Does your heart say, "O Jesus ! why art Thou so distant from me ?" Stop a moment and listen to Him. You are in too great haste to charge Him foolishly. He is not distant from you, but you keep at a distance from Him. He asks you to take His yoke. You profess to be very willing to take it, and you think you have it on you, but it galls and frets you, and you are wondering what can be the reason. We can easily tell you, for he says His yoke is easy ; and He does not lie. His words are the essence

of truth. Your difficulty is, that you are not fully under the yoke. It is the *end* of the yoke that galls your neck and frets your soul. He continues asking you to come, and you just come far enough to get the name of the yoke upon you, but not far enough to be fastened in with Jesus. You desire Jesus, but you desire a little of your own way. You look to Jesus, and you look a little to the world also. You love Jesus, but you have not entirely put off the love of self, and ease, and worldly companions, and dress, and show. No wonder the yoke of Jesus is hard to you, and it will be harder still. And more than that, Jesus condemns all such unbelief. "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Now it may look well to the world that you are come so near to Jesus as to feel His yoke upon your neck, but imagine what Jesus must say while you only stand with the end of the yoke fretting you. He tells you that does not help the work at all. There He stands, meek and lowly, and so patient with you too. Do not stand off so. Fall at once under the yoke and learn of Him. He is meek and lowly, and will show you *in His yoke, not out of it*, His own blessedness. "Come in with me," He says, "and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The moment that your neck falls into the right place of the yoke of Jesus, you will find

complete rest, fretting will cease, and joy shall abound in your once doubting, halting soul. For you shall be yoked in with Jesus, in a sweet, abiding, soul-enrapturing union. Sweet shall be His words unto you — yea, sweeter than honey to your mouth. Your fellowship shall be with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. Truly, “great is the mystery of godliness.” The Holy “Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” And now “He dwelleth with us and shall be in us,” by His Holy Spirit. Now, ye that are yoked with Christ may well rejoice, “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

In this pleasing yoke of union and of fellowship with Christ Jesus we may fully lean up against Him. In this case, yoking means resting — resting in labor and in care. Let your feet walk only, and, resting on Him, leaning up against Him, as a tender husband, He shall cherish you, so that the labor shall only do you good and comfort you, and you shall wish to continue in the precious walk of faith. Your clothes shall not wax old upon you, and your shoe shall not wax old upon your foot, and your feet shall not swell. Blessed union! Precious Jesus, Companion of the way! What freedom is like

this? In peace like a river, in joy unspeakable and full of glory, in glowing courage, in glorious independence, we may gladly take our place under the yoke of Christ, for He shall make us free with His own liberty. We shall go where He goes, whose track is in all the universe, and whose grace reveals the glory of eternal triumph. If we are truly in-yoked with Jesus, His cause and ours one, our life hid with His, how shall the voice of Jesus be heard in His truth, how shall His strength be perfected in our weakness, His virtues cover all our natural deformities, and His life appear in all our acts? What language shall express our sacred pleasures? The very yoke will be delightful, and the burden shall be pleasing. Lonely fellowship with Jesus shall show to us, and cause the truth to be seen by others in our life, even the truth spoken by His own sweet lips — “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

Are you, precious soul, under the yoke of Christ? Tender and surpassing is the full consciousness of that position.

CHAPTER II.

CAN I BE HOLY?

“My soul longs to have power over sin, and to be free from it. Tell me, all ye that fear God, *Can I be holy?*”

Yes, beloved, surely you can. Otherwise the glorious God of our salvation would not have commanded you to be holy. He commands what He has made full provision for you to perform. There is not, there cannot be, a felt want of your renewed nature which lacks supply, for He “is *able* to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think.” And that He is *willing*, His ability, so declared, is full proof. But besides, He has said, “Ask *what ye will*, and it shall be done unto you.” “*How much more* shall your Father give THE HOLY SPIRIT to them that ask Him.” Now the Holy Spirit was given “without measure” to Christ. For what is this especial mention made, when Jesus already possessed Him in inseparable relationship, but that His body, the Church, “the fulness of Him that filleth all in all,” might “out of His fulness receive grace for grace,” might “be filled with all the ful-

ness of God," and thus be possessed of this changeless demand of the regenerate soul, entire holiness?

Oh, the wiliness of the devil! He has succeeded in making the ways of Zion desolate; bringing in unbelief like a flood, by proving falsely to God's people that the habit of sinning must be an essential accompaniment of their humanity, even after Christ redeems them.

I. We invite the reader, in answer to the above question, to the fact that *God designed for His Church, in this Gospel dispensation, a*

PERPETUAL PASSOVER FEAST.

"Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is crucified for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."
— 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

The Corinthian Church seems to have been very corrupt, even at the early date of Paul's writing. He was careful to warn them, and to exercise toward them his apostolic authority. For some reason, possibly the prominent position or wealth of the offender, they had not mourned over a very grave sin committed; they had not brought the offender to discipline, but they had permitted him to retain his place in the Church, and had even taken pleas-

ure in his company. The Apostle exhorts them in the fact which he presents, that a "little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

This thought takes him back to the Jewish Passover, and he urges them to act in consistency with the Passover character which they now sustain. For he here gives them an extensive hint, that though they are not Jews, they yet have come to a Passover feast, which provides greater inducements to holy living than the Jews ever knew.

These hints are contained in the passage above cited. The Jews put away all leaven from their houses during the celebration of the Passover. Here is the command of God upon this subject: "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel." — Ex. xii. 15. "Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters." — Ex. xiii. 7.

Our Saviour used the word leaven as indicative of the *wrong doctrines* of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Matt. xvi. 6, 12). "Jesus said unto them, 'Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.'" And after His explanations, "Then understood they how that He bade them

not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."

The Lord Jesus by this word leaven also alluded to the *hypocritical practices* of the Pharisees: "He began to say unto His disciples first of all, 'Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.'" — Luke xii. 1.

Now the Apostle Paul, having referred to a specific case of flagrant crime in the Church, as a leaven of wickedness which would soon leaven the whole lump, exhorts the Church, by the practice of casting out leaven from the houses of the Jews at the Passover feast, to "purge out the old leaven," in the person of the offender, that they may be a new lump, and unleavened with sin. "Therefore put away from yourselves that wicked person." — Ver. 13.

The Gospel Church, composed of those who profess faith in Christ, *is supposed to be the new lump, free from that old leaven of sin*, and, like the bread at the Passover, without leaven, *ready to be scrutinized by Him who had forbidden any leaven at His solemn feast*. "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven [such as they had among the Jewish Pharisees and Sadducees], *neither* with the leaven of malice and wickedness [with which the world abounds], but with the unleavened (bread) of sincerity and truth."

The word translated sincerity has reference to its

inspection. Its strict meaning is —“judged of in the sunlight,” and signifies “such a purity and whiteness as will bear the closest examination, like that of an article inspected in the full light of the sun.” — (Bloomfield.) As if the Apostle had said, “The old leaven of sin, insincerity, want of uprightness, belonged to the old dispensation, before Christ came, when they lived in spiritual twilight, and did not have freest access to the holiest by the blood of the Antitype Paschal Lamb.”

But we have come to a new passover, A PERPETUAL FEAST OF FULL REDEMPTION. Christ, our sacrificed Passover, is now to be eaten by a living faith, and you are to be in Him, free from those things for which they had any shadow of excuse in the old Jewish and imperfect dispensation of types and shadows. Let us keep this life-long feast, therefore, in shining characters, in clean garments, in Gospel righteousness.

Beloved reader, how are you partaking this New Testament Passover? Christ is the last Paschal Lamb, and as they were required to *eat the whole lamb* at the Passover feast, *so are we to feast* on Christ. As they ate the whole lamb, let us derive our life from *all the offices of Christ, and every benefit of his death*. Nothing of what Christ has done is to be passed by. He died to save us from all leaven of sin, that it might be rooted out and

cast away, and that our lives might shine with His holiness.

Any other view deprives the Church of the full benefit of His death ; destroys the Passover character of the present dispensation, and cultivates a fearful form of unbelief, which must inevitably end in the amalgamation of the Church with the world. Let us eat the slain Lamb, by living faith in His merits and finished work, and so enjoy heaven upon earth. For such is this feast.

THE GOSPEL CHURCH HAS COME TO A PERPETUAL PASSOVER FEAST.

This is the position in which we stand to-day. We are not of the Jewish race, bound down to ceremonies, and looking forward to an unseen Christ. "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words ; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more (for they could not endure that which was commanded. And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake) ; but ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God

the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Yes, the holy Passover of the Gospel dispensation long since commenced. Proclaim it on every house-top that the Paschal Lamb has been slain, that He has been slain for us. At the feast of the Passover they killed a lamb in each family (or if any could not get a lamb, they killed a kid). If a lamb was too much for one family to eat, two families could associate together. With the blood of this lamb the door-posts were sprinkled, that the destroying angel might pass over the place—it being understood that in every house where the door-post was not so sprinkled the destroying angel would take the first-born. These lambs were many. Jesus is the last Paschal Lamb. Once, and once for all, He suffered that He might bring us to God. He set up a memorial feast, which was to endure for all time, in remembrance of Himself; and now it stands a constant witness to the world, saying in language which cannot be mistaken, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." The promise, and the invitation of the Passover feast, to come and be saved from the general destruction, are placed everywhere throughout the whole world, so that he who runs may read.

To this Passover feast every believer in Jesus has

been freely invited, and has come, that he may join in the solemnities of the great redemption. "Let us keep the feast," says the Apostle. "Let us keep the feast," said Luther and they of the Reformation. And so it comes through the ages, until we have taken up the strain, and we now say to each other in holy fellowship of love, "Let us keep the feast." What feast? This life-feast of the Gospel Church, this amazing life of feeding upon Jesus. Is not that a *feast*?

We should well understand the nature of this ordination of God for our life. Let us remark that this perpetual Passover —

1. Is a feast of abounding love. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and gave His Son to die for us." Here we stop a moment and ask, "What can we know of this love? What more than the mighty fact? God has written it; we have experienced it; it has been welling up in our souls a living stream these years, and we know it as the most prominent fact of our lives, that the love of God towards us passes all description. It has been written many times that God loved us, but His highest exhibition was written in the blood of His Son. Christ is the loving Lamb. You cannot see Him as He was with His Father ere time began. You cannot see Him taking human flesh in deep humiliations, even down to the fierce assaults of the arch-adversary. You cannot see Him

in the awful trials of Gethsemane, nor in the desertion of His Father's face. But these are living facts in His life. He chose the suffering which should make you free, and give your ransomed spirit rest on earth and in heaven. Love made the choice, love took the steps in the mighty sacrifice, love refused to be free from the dreadful load, love uttered the cry, "It is finished," and filled heaven with its own results, as lasting as eternity, and more glorious than Eden. These are things of every-day rejoicing now ! The common faith enjoys a common love, called common from its free extension, and its extensive reach, but unheard of, unthought of, unconceived, except in the place of its holy origin, the mind of the eternal God ; impossible in any place of all His universe beside. Glory ! hallelujah ! Let love return its free doxologies, and the believer's life proclaim them in holy devotion to the Lord, the Lamb.

2. Our perpetual Passover, in which the elect of God are now engaged, is a feast of security. This was the peculiarity of the ceremonial observance of the Passover by the Jews. While all the surrounding Egyptians were filled with grief over the death of their choice treasures in children, the people of Israel and of God were rejoicing with peculiar gladness, not only in the freedom, but in the miracle by which it came to pass. It was a season of peculiar security. Great must have been their gratitude as they looked upon their first-born. We may im-

agine the pious father fondly eying his boy, who had been spared to him by the special interposition of the Divine Hand, his heart and his eyes filling with emotions which choked his utterance. "My saved boy!" he cries; "but for the mercy of God specially interposed, this house would to-day be filled with grief almost beyond endurance. Listen to the wails of the poor afflicted families of the land, and think, my son," he says, "of thyself, lest thou shouldst presumptuously sin against the Lord, and bring upon thyself swift vengeance."

Beloved brethren, it is a fact which must not be forgotten, that the destroying angel has passed over us—yea, that he has no power over us who believe in Jesus, unless we turn away from Him in wickedness. "Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." They are secure who believe in Jesus, who are touched with His blood, who eat the Paschal Lamb. For, as we have before seen from the Scriptures, they ate the lamb which they killed and whose blood was on the door-posts. They were forbidden to leave it untouched; they were to eat it all up, and leave none. *We are to eat Jesus.* We are to leave none of His offices, or of the benefits of His covenant, unappropriated. He cannot be received in part, nor will it do simply to appropriate His blood as

our redemption, and then forget our living union with Himself, and leave uncultivated that heavenly relationship which binds us by faith to the eternal God. In other words, our faith is to accept Jesus Christ for everything ; to hold on to Him for everything in the present and in the future. And he who thus appropriates Jesus in his daily living ; to whom Jesus is a constant, and everlasting, and soul-absorbing portion ; to whom Jesus is the external price for salvation, and the inworking power of it in his soul—this man, who looks unto Jesus to do everything for him, even to the moulding of his daily thoughts—this man, to whom communion with Jesus is heaven—this one, to whom life with Jesus is a deep-flowing river of peace and joy beyond all earthly comforts, and compared with which every amusement of the vain and giddy throng sinks into indescribable littleness and vanity—this man is as secure as though he had passed the portals of bliss. His life is hid with Christ in God. He has commenced the joy of heaven. He shall not be disappointed. The word of the Lord has passed upon him, that he shall belong to Him in the day when He maketh up His jewels. Ye little pilgrims, who are called foolish by the world because ye have chosen the way of childlike trust, because ye are walking so softly lest ye might fail to hear some of the whisperings of the still small voice of the precious Holy Ghost ! ye Marys, who have chosen less

of show and more of Christ, who will not be disengaged from His charms for all the extra preparations of a happy worldly life ! ye who choose the cross of holy denial for Jesus' sake ! ye who pant for more of Him, ye who cry from real hungering after Jesus, —

“ Give me Thyself ! From every boast,
From every wish set free,
Let all I am in Thee be lost,
But give Thyself to me ! ”

Happy, happy band ! How shall I speak of your heavenly security ! How shall we make mention of the faithfulness of God, which shall assuredly bring us in “ through the gates into the city,” nevermore to go out ! Already hath He given to us everlasting life, nor shall we ever perish, nor shall any be able to pluck us out of our Saviour's or His Father's hand. Men may hate ; devils may madly rage ; but the vengeance they swear shall be as the morning cloud and as the early dew — for ere their hand can raise itself against us, they shall cry in pain and in the confusion of vanquished and tortured prisoners, “ What have we to do with thee, thou Son of God ? art thou come to torment us before the time ? ” And this because His blood is upon the door-posts of our heart. He has made entrance into our hearts as His own palace, because His blood was there. And will He, keeper and Lord of the same, who once turned out the money-

changers from our souls, that we might be clean for His own abode, — will He deliver them over to Satan? Are not our hearts His heaven? and will He let Satan do anything in heaven?

“ Rejoice, believer in the Lord,
Who makes your cause His own ;
The hope that’s built upon His word
Can ne’er be overthrown.”

Christ, our Passover, is slain that we might feast on His abounding love, and be secure in the possession of that heavenly inheritance of which we have had so many and so sweet foretastes, by the baptisms of the heavenly Paraclete, the Holy Ghost.

3. It is a feast of the *New Lump*. The old leaven was put out of the houses of the Jews far away from sight and sense of it. It was a feast of unleavened bread. The old leaven of sin is now gone. We are called sinners no longer, but now are called by that memorial name, memorial of our ruin and of our rescue, “SINNERS SAVED.” Sinners in memory and in confessions from the past, saved in present realizations of His grace, by whose power “we may live in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.” We were once unrighteous, and among those who shall not inherit the kingdom of God. “But we are washed, but we are sanctified, but we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” Heavy is the guilt of him who, having received this grace of Christ,

goes back to the beggarly elements of a worldly life, or who knowingly and wilfully sins in the transgression of the law of God. We belong to the new lump, as we are unleavened. "Old things have passed away, behold all things have become new." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Because Christ could not dwell with the old creature of sin and of damnable doings.

And what is this new lump? It is the people free from old sins, which acted as leaven, now with the old leaven cast out to keep the feast (which is perpetual), with sincerity and truth, or in such a way that they can be scrutinized. The unleavened bread used at the Passover was a symbol of the condition and actions of the people, and hence the ancient passover was a feast of entire separation from the surrounding world. They were free as the bread they ate, from all relationship to the citizens of other states. They were peculiarly set apart, and did peculiarly set themselves apart as the people of God. When they left Egypt they partook of the Passover with their sandals fastened to their feet, and their clothing already adjusted for their journey to the promised land.

They were in haste to get away, and *had no time* for leavening their bread. Is it not so with the nobler race of the children of Abraham by faith? Is not a soul for glory *really* bound, free from any relationship with the ungodly world? Free from its

lightness and vanity? Free to study the holy oracles of God, in *deep solemnity*, away from the mirthful rounds of those who seek and find their portion here below? Is not such a soul in haste to get away from the ungodly and from the charms that chain to earth and sense? Have such as are truly born of God time to stop for a little leavening of the world which they may mix with the holy charms of their Christ life? No, no. The oil of heavenly grace and the water from earthly streams will not mingle. Christ, and His Word, and His ordinances, His Blood, and His Holy Spirit, and His living intercessions, His death, and His hidden life for the Church, and His awfully solemn eternity, as established in a spiritual and holy life, will not agree with the petit questions of a butterfly life.

Beloved, we who do trust the Lord Jesus with the simplest faith are living a Passover life. We are having a holy feast of entire separation, sojourners in a strange land, as all our fathers were. We are of the new lump. They tell us that Christians cannot be scrutinized. Well, then, they cannot belong to the new lump. They are not the proper partakers of the Paschal Lamb. For none such could partake as were in any way disqualified. Our holy profession is an invitation to men to see if we forsake the Lord. And they are most miserably deceived who profess to belong to the new lump when they cherish the old leaven. Not so, friends!

You are most miserably deceived. "The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." — 2 Cor. iv. 4.

"Cast out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth?"

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

II. In answer to the question, "Can I be holy." There are distinct instructions in the Word of God upon the *ability* and *willingness* of our Redeemer and the Eternal Father, with the Holy Ghost, to produce such a result in our hearts and lives. For it must be conceded by those who have tried every way to become holy and have failed that the work of our sanctification is only the Lord's. Our part in the gracious plan is — "ONLY BELIEVE."

JESUS IS ABLE TO SAVE.

Surely there is enough for our faith to rest upon. Jesus the Living Word and the written Word agree. Christ the Living Word will make the written word true in our hearts. And so the lowest state of

grace is called glory—and it is truly glorious. “We, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory. The youngest saint has had heaven introduced into his soul, and lives in glory—the glory of a risen Lord—“that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

You may know the written word with precision, you may be able to speak and pray in scriptural phrase with elegance, you may take front rank among the masters of Biblical criticism, you may even write sermons that charm the multitude—and yet you may be living only in the vestibule of God's temple of grace; you *may be* unsaved! *But if Christ be enthroned “without a rival,” you will have the meaning of the Holy Word written upon your soul.* Beloved, what may we not expect the Living Word, the Living Lord, our Living Christ to do when He has the control of our hearts and lives, and when from the inner springs of our being, He, with *our full consent* (He will not do it without), brings every power into harmony with His own life. As the Living Word, He will make possible to us, He will bring out into living realities, all the prophecies and promises of the written word, so that *we* may become living epistles, known and read of men.

We do not degrade our royal High Priest. His

glory is that "*He is able to save unto the uttermost* all that come unto God by Him." Now that word "uttermost" is sweetly descriptive of the greatness of His work, and its far-reaching compass. The salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ extends not only to the coming eternity as to duration, but it covers every possible longing, the outmost reach of the desires of a soul which God has touched — it covers not only the "whosoever will," as to the number of partakers, but the "whatsoever" they will ask — not only the promises in general, but every "exceeding great and precious promise," in every phase and application with which it may be taken to the throne by those in whom the Spirit prays "with groanings which cannot be uttered." The cups may differ in size, but whatever the capacity, we may all cry "*my cup runneth over.*"

Now, then, beloved Christians, who long to live above the clouds that hide your Sun, see your holy privilege. *First, you have the word* — that is written before your eyes, and it is all true. You may live in the enclosure of that word, *fully saved, fully at rest* (even though by external circumstances tossed about), your heart day by day, year by year, enjoying what the Scripture says (other) "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of [other] man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." *And then* — to assure you, to show you how this

may be, to exalt your soul, *you have Jesus—the Indwelling Word.*

We that have felt His power are no unbelievers in the supreme divinity of our Lord. We know Him to be Almighty—for we know that He is able to save from the lowest hell to the highest heaven, and to make a heaven on earth which devils and men have tried to turn into a hell. We know Him to be *omnipresent*—for our praises in the matter of our *present* salvation are this moment going up from every quarter of the world—where it is midnight, where it is sunrise, in arctic and antarctic seas. He is everywhere present to do the work, and to hear the songs of His saved host. Of His divine infallibility, and His infallible presence in power, we are all well assured. Why, then, should our weakness present any barrier or make us to doubt? We may well doubt ourselves—that we ought to do—we ought to be, we will be, if true Christians, filled to our utmost of doubts in ourselves. But, beloved, he that is always crying “my weakness, my weakness,” will be often crying “my *leanness*, my *leanness*.” Looking at ourselves will not save us; it always has and always will make us miserable. And the more wicked we have been, the more unbelieving will a look within make us. We shall be saying, “How can it be that I should be raised to such blessedness?” instead of taking it to ourselves. Many think they must look within

to make them humble. But that is a mistaken view of humility. For many who look within, and confess themselves to be full of all uncleanness, supposing this to be humility, would be among the last persons to follow Jesus wherever He goes. We may be humiliated without being humble — full of shame for sin, but just as full of pride in action.

True humility is an active grace. It “follows the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.” It does not ask, “Is that agreeable to my position?” “Will it do for me to take such an humble place?” “Shall I throw away my education, and advantages, and position thus?” When Jesus calls anywhere, the truly humble soul will go with Him. Its only question is, “Is this assuredly the call of Jesus?”

“The cross for Christ I’ll cherish,
Its crucifixion bear;
All hail reproach or sorrow,
If Jesus leads me there.”

Beloved, let it be believed, receive it into your heart as a gracious fact, that the sight of our “uttermost” Saviour will make us thus humble — and this is the only thing that will produce the gracious result. For our looking to Him is the opening of the door into which He assuredly enters, that He may sup with us, and we with Him.

Therefore, let us not be crying “my weakness, my weakness.” But let us be confessing, “My Lord, and my God;” *not*, “I can do nothing,”

but "unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think ;" *not* "where will this scene of sorrow and trial end ?" *but*, "He is able to succor me," "to make me stand," "to keep that which I have committed unto Him." O ye children of a covenant-keeping God ! why should your weakness make you to doubt ? The gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto *salvation*, and Jesus is the living Gospel. All therefore that seems impossible in the written word is made possible by his ability to save unto the uttermost.

But observe, that though the Lord Jesus is so "able to save unto the uttermost," yet He will not do our part of the work. He will raise dead Lazarus, but He will have men to take the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and to loose him and let him go. You need not ask Him if you will consecrate all to Him. Do it at once. Do not ask Him if you may wash in the "opened fountain." Do it at once and be clean. For as the Holy Ghost descended upon Jesus when He was baptized, so shall He come upon you washing in that sacred Blood. Do your part, cast everything away and look unto Jesus, and He will do His part in the fulfilment of promises that make a heaven below.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day ;
And there do I, as vile as he,
Wash all my sins away."

THE GREAT PHYSICIAN'S CURE.

Many Christians, by their confessions, seem only half cured of sin. They say that they are living in known sin, that they greatly feel the plague of their hearts, that they feel indifferent to the things of Christ, that they never feel any burden for souls, that they know they are unfaithful to the Lord who bought them. Ministers, too, confess that they continually go astray, that they are very far from right, that they do not love Jesus as much as they ought, that they often fall into grievous faults, and that they must call themselves sinners, yea, even the very chief of sinners.

This confession is quite universal. But it is also commended. They insist on the constant necessity of such confession, and some go so far as to say, that if a man do not feel himself to be the "chief of sinners," he does not know his own heart. As for ourselves, we used to be the chief of sinners, but now we are the chief of sinners SAVED. That was what Paul meant. He says that Jesus saved him, the chief of sinners. Then he was the chief of sinners no longer. The chief of sinners saved *by himself* would be a worse than chief afterwards, but the chief of sinners *saved by Jesus Christ* became a saint. Paul was a saint when he wrote those memorable words. The same Omnipotent Physician lives to-day, to cure and save from sin.

Jesus truly saves. He performs no half cure. He turns the soul from sin completely over to holiness. He does not tell us that He will leave us in a little darkness, but He does say to all who come to Him for a cure, "If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light."

Nor has He when He cured our souls left us under a fatal necessity of sinning, for it is his work "*to save us from our sins*," that we "might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life." In the most explicit terms He has promised in these gospel days, "Ye shall be clean." "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes." This is the promise of that better covenant which God brought into the Church by the dispensation of the Spirit. The Apostles and early Church entered into the enjoyment of that promise, and *we* are to be "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.

Now of the ministers and Christians above noticed, we must ask, Who cured them of the old disease? Who cured them so as to leave the disease remaining with some of its worst sores? Surely that is not the way in which Jesus cures. It must have been *Jesus and themselves*. We should not think much of a physician who invariably left the patient with the remains of the complaint

which he was expected to be the instrument in eradicating. And the *reliable* physician who should see a return of the disease upon his patient would say, that the patient had taken his case in his own hands. We fear the great Physician might say the same of these. After He has cured them, blotted out the old record, received the profession of their entire homage, they go into the world, they give themselves to forgetfulness, they make money and reputation sometimes at the cost of true and undefiled religion. How, then, can the cure of the great Physician appear?

We advise that they let Jesus work alone, that they be all absorbed in Him and in His work, and that they study the undoubted meaning of His word, that they be slow to move when a lower nature hastens them on, and quick to move when the earthly keeps them back; always fulfilling the conditions of that spiritual nature which sinks name and reputation and possession, and living itself in the will of God in Christ. Most positive are we, that if they will let Jesus work, they shall know the joy of a perfect cure after the manner of a God, and not of man. Cease from man, cease from yourself, hide yourself so effectually that it can never be said that you are seeking your own honor, your own ends, or that you are even appearing to build up your business at the cost of any other man. This is unearthly, it is true. But it is heavenly.

It is what we might expect Jesus to do for us, so that we may shine before men in the light of His own righteousness, thus to glorify our Father who is in heaven.

How can you live, Christian, without this perfect cure of Christ? How can you endure to dishonor Christ and his workmanship by confessing that His work is so incomplete? How can you have it that in your heart Christ and Satan should be so at strife, and Satan often and often getting great advantages? Has not Jesus proclaimed and exhibited His most complete sovereignty over Satan and all his works. End this strife by letting Jesus rule alone. *No longer* let the name of the temple of your soul be *Jesus and I*—but let it be *Jesus*. But you say that you are such a very hard-hearted soul. What hinders that? Is there any rock Jesus cannot break? Were not the disciples first called Christians in Antioch, “a centre of moral putrefaction”? The great Physician invades the worst of places, and of the hardest souls He makes lamb-like and Christ-like spirits. May this great Physician “sanctify you wholly.” “Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.”

GOD IS WILLING.

God is fully willing.

1. That we should believe, and tell abroad, the fact that we do undoubtedly enjoy the washing of

regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; and that we have sweetly partaken of his baptisms, when we are conscious of these facts.

2. That we should believe that we are kept as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

3. That we should believe that we can be, and are, "dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ."

4. To have us think that we may be filled with righteousness.

5. And that, by the blood and Spirit of Christ, we can be "pure in heart."

6. And that he has power and willingness to meet the full extent of our desire to be like him.

But we believe not only that God is willing in these things. He has constituted us His "witnesses" of them, and of all that Jesus Christ came to accomplish for believers. We are, then, coming very far short of His glory, if we remain unwilling ; or, if we remain unable (since we may get all ability from Him by faith) to testify to His full work in us. Who could be content to testify that the work of the Lord does not meet the demands of our renewed nature, in every high and Godward aspiration of our souls ? It cannot be that Jesus never designed to have a full testimony from men of what His word says He came to do.

III. *What is Holiness ?* We desire to make the answer to this question very plain, that we may not

be numbered among that class of men known as Perfectionists. Their distinguishing feature as judged by an outsider (who desires always to remain an outsider to damning error) is, that Jesus is so formed in them as to make it impossible for them to fall into sin. It would appear that they believe in infallibility. We have no such doctrine. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

Christian perfection is not perfectionism. It is no pet scheme of a sect or community. It is the Lord's gift to His people of every name, His work in their hearts, and is to be the characteristic of His Church above all the denominational names by which she may, in various sections, be called. It is the fine linen which is the righteousness of the saints of all ages, and whoever, being fully the Lord's, has walked in conscious fellowship with Christ, has had this precious grace, for the longer or shorter period, of such conscious fellowship. That it was not a continuance in many cases, may have been owing to ignorance of the possibility of such a continuance, or to a fall into sin, or to that fearful unbelief which has often turned heaven on earth into despair.

Holiness is not Adamic, but it is better than anything Adamic; it is connected indeed with beings who have fallen far below the standard of

Adam's integrity, as to powers and capacities ; yet when we consider the *imputation of Christ's righteousness* upon our fallen natures, thus restoring us to all the favor which Adam had, and *besides this*, HIS DIVINE INDWELLING, we have a security infinitely beyond Adam's strength, to keep the law. We say it with hearts, and mouths, and lives full of praise. Our imperfections so un-Adamic would send us to hell, but Jesus' blood covers them all. This is imputation, of which we shall have more to say further on. Jesus has more than restored the ruins of the fall, so that though we confess our perfection cannot be Adamic, being conformable to our present imperfect capacities, yet we boast in that which Adam and angels have not, though we also confess that our present graces are not angelic.

In either sense we join with Paul, and say, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." And yet let it be understood, that we join with Paul in the same chapter (Philippians iv.) in his other sense of the word perfect, as adapted to our present fallen capacities. "Let as many as be perfect be thus minded."

Holiness is salvation from sin, and is known under several terms which are drawn from the word of the Lord.

SALVATION FROM SIN.

Salvation from sin is the essence of Christ's benefits. If we have this, we have all other things which "accompany salvation." If any man do not have salvation from sin by the Blood of Christ, in some measure, he is none of His. In proportion as the Christian enjoys this is he a happy Christian, and powerful in his life as a true exponent of the word of Him who came "to save His people from their sins."

All His work in our souls begins with this. For "God hath from the beginning chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." So when Jesus comes to a soul, He comes in this way, and the soul finds no way into His kingdom but through the cleansing Blood. He comes in as he is cleansed. As he comes in he loses the burden of sin, and he need never have another burden if he simply trust Him who came "in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin," "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." How shall we walk "not after the flesh but after the Spirit"? Evidently by hiding where alone all the contraries of our nature find their cure, where alone all our powers can be attuned to worship, and to holy living.

This can never be done by our struggling, or by

our doing. We must "cease from our own works as God did from His." He rested in Himself. We cannot rest in ourselves, but we may completely rest in Him. Now if He had not willed it so, we could not rest in Him ; but that He has willed it, we fully see in the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," which "hath made us free from the law of sin and death."

It would indeed be very strange if God had not willed our salvation from sin, the very purpose for which Christ died. This would hinder our world from any benefit of His death. But a serious question with the people of God is concerning the *extent* of this benefit. Perhaps the great majority of those to whom I write expect remaining depravity to haunt them to their dying day. My only desire is for practical results. It is a fact that remaining sin does distress multitudes — that is surely a result of total depravity.

But now for the result of the work of Christ. If sin dwell within me, I can get Christ to dwell within. Which overcomes ? If sin is a "root," Christ is the beginning of all things, and the root cannot grow, cannot leaf out, if His sovereign power be placed upon it. He certainly will keep it down as a *dead* root, if this be what I ask of Him and believe Him for. If sin be a body, corrupt and corrupting, to which I am chained, Jesus designs that my joy shall be full. *As long as He reigns with-*

out a rival, surely that body is held at His arm's length, which is to me as far as the ends of the universe. It need not trouble me if my eyes are upon Him. If sin be a fountain, then as long as Christ is in me the fountain must be healed of all its sting and bitterness. I am utterly unable to see how sin can have any dominion or power, or active presence, if Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords, dwell within. His presence is sin's expulsion.

It is urged by many that "sin is any want of conformity to the law of God," and as we are imperfect creatures, we therefore, as such, are sinful. It is freely admitted that we are very imperfect. But Jesus came, that He might also keep this imperfection under, and use it according to its capacity for His own service, delivering it from all that can be of any service to the kingdom of Satan. And thus it is recorded that "He of God is made unto us" (imperfect as we are) "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." I may, therefore, confidently expect Jesus, "my Life," to make use of my judgment, and understanding, and will, in His own wisdom, yea, to make me wise in the use of these for the purposes of His kingdom in my own sphere. And that, therefore, which is so weak in itself, by Him has saintly power. I need not, therefore, be anxious about the amount of sin which is left, when by His reigning grace, yea, by His sure presence, I am not conscious of a single

desire outside of His will, nor of a departure from Him in my ways.

Beloved, behold the complete redemption ! Remember it is "Jesus all the day long." Without Him the heart is a cage of unclean birds. With Him it is "all glorious within." Our very imperfection is complete in Him. He will make all our powers produce their best results for our sphere, making complete the work of our hands, our limbs ; opening our eyes to see, our minds to understand and to discern the place, the time, the manner of every engagement.

Oh, how glad I am that Jesus can take me, who have made so many failures in the past, and make the most of me now ; that I can put myself in His hands with this faith, and trust Him so to *guide me with His eye*, and so to "cleanse me from all unrighteousness," that my present life (full salvation is present salvation) shall not be a blot in His kingdom, as my past has been ! Yes, Jesus will make the most of me that can be made. Ah ! that makes me glad indeed ! How willing will I be to give Him all the glory, and to confess myself at best a very unprofitable servant !

"Take my poor heart, and let it be
Forever closed to all but Thee."

Surely, beloved, salvation from sin by the adorable Holy Ghost, through the Blood of Jesus, cannot be a very alarming error. It is of the marrow

of truth. Does not some reader feel that this is just what he needs? Have you not hungered and thirsted for righteousness? Then, believing, you shall be filled, for "as sin hath reigned unto death, even so may grace reign *through righteousness*, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." It is His will "even your sanctification." That is not published as His will for one or two Thessalonians, but for all the Church of God; for the greatest variety of statement is given to the same truth in all the inspired messages to His scattered Church. *Your* sanctification — yes, my dear brother, *yours*. Do not argue upon its attainability; do not say some of your neighbors in the house of God need the grace — this message is for you.

You, beloved, may walk and live in all holy conversation and godliness, "in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of your life." "Is this precious experience so near to me, then," do you ask? Yes, beloved, because the God of the saints is so near — because Jesus and the Holy Ghost have come from God the Father to "seal you unto the day of redemption." Your will, it may be, is the only hindrance. Your will is the door into your heart. If that is closed, or not widely open to welcome the Heavenly Guest, then you may long and vainly wait for the gracious shower. Let your will be yielded in everything for His own sake, and then believing is very easy.

The self-willed lose the blessing, from the difficulty of faith — the contrite get their empty hearts full. Do not weep, dear child of God. Let God have all at once ; raise the knife to the Isaac which conscience tells you is to be yielded up, which hinders the Almighty Worker from shining within and through you in "*newness of life.*" Come and let Him whose name is Jesus save you from your sins. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly ; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

THE TERMS WE USE.

It is to be borne in mind, that our terms are the very words of Scripture. God himself has supplied us with the name of His blessings, and we have simply taken Him at His word, and taken His own chosen language. Nor do we undertake to explain any of our terms by any abstruse meaning, or by twisting words in any way whatever. We take the terms in their most obvious meaning ; we use them in their proper connections, in the tenses which belong to them, and with the most sensible view of the scope of the passages in which they stand.

We desire to take God's words and God's thoughts — that is, the words of Scripture — in

their apparent relations. For these are by His own inspiration. Let the reader then examine well the terms we have used, or those which are used by the upholders of Scriptural holiness. "If any speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

1. *Sanctification*. It is God's word, and refers both to His own work and ours. In His work, no one will doubt its perfection, and as regards our own sanctification, or the setting apart of ourselves, no one doubts that if in the consecration anything be reserved to ourselves, it is as if nothing at all were set apart, for God claims *all*, and must have all in order to make good His own word that "if any man be in Christ, he is a NEW creature."

This word, then, denotes a radical change of the whole being, from sin to holiness, from darkness to light, from the service of self and Satan to the service of God, and from any dependence on man to an entire dependence on God the Holy Ghost, to work within the soul, what God the Son has already wrought for us on the cross.

The word translated in our English Bible, "holiness" — "sanctification" — is not found in Greek writers, but belongs to the Bible, and to saintly language. It expresses the work of God in the heart of the believer. Its first reference is to the cleansing of the Holy Spirit. As man is cleansed in every part of his nature by the Holy Spirit, and every

part of his being is set at work for God by the cleansing blood, it is most appropriate to translate the word "holiness" or "wholeness."

A beautiful description of its action is found in Rom. vi. 22 : "Now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." The whole sixth chapter of Romans is indeed a proper illustration of the meaning of this word. The same word is connected with that work of the Holy Ghost which is called "sanctification of the Spirit." God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through *sanctification of the Spirit* and belief of the truth." (2 Thess. ii. 13.) "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the *sanctification of the Spirit*, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter i. 2.)

Sanctification is, therefore, inseparably connected with belief of the truth. Not a mere mental belief, but a belief down deep in the heart, an internal reception of the truth of God as the very life of our souls. It is the very beginning of glory, because we spiritually see things to which we were before blind. This internal reception of God's truth is a positive consciousness that everything He has said is true though the wisest of mortals may laugh at it as an utter impossibility. It is a great thing for man to believe God ! The difficulty in the fall of our first

parents was that they permitted a parley on the truth of God. The redemption of Christ restores the ability to take Him at His word, and to act accordingly. And that action which is based upon the truth of God is saintly action, and is rightly called after the name of the Restorer, "sanctification of the Spirit."

The word is also inseparably connected with the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus and obedience, as in the text already quoted from 1 Peter i. 2. "But ye are come . . . to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. xii. 24.) In fact, the blood of Jesus is the price of the whole salvation, including the purchase of the Holy Ghost, and it is the cleansing power which the Holy Ghost uses in freeing the soul from the guilt, power, and pollution of sin. "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John xvi. 14.) "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ."

Here, it is seen, that obedience is wrought in the soul by the Lord's own inworking. We are obedient as the Lord works in us that which he loves to

see. And this, even His own, is the power by which we are "kept through faith unto salvation."

Our High Priest has ascended into the holiest place, with absolute holiness of His own, and communicable holiness for us. He is infinitely full of holiness. And as He has purchased our redemption with His precious blood, He now sends His Spirit, that His own holiness may be communicated to us. Now the Holy Spirit of God must be honored. He is the efficient agent in all our walk and life of faith. By Him God works in us, and He it is that helpeth our infirmities, and prays within us with unutterable groanings, and controls the living energies of soul and body, that we may be moved Godward.

If He do the work, and our part is simply to believe, being purified by faith, then we must suppose that sanctification is *a complete work*. This is the doctrine of Holy Scripture. "Complete in Him." (Col. ii. 10.) Practically complete in him as well as judicially. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, *even so might grace reign* THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

We do well, therefore, *when by faith in the Holy Spirit's inworking power* we "reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus by the Holy

Spirit we have power over sin so that we are able, IN HIM, to mind and keep the demand, "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." We are utterly unable to see upon what gospel basis Christians can either harbor sin, or teach that indwelling sin is a necessary attendant of the Christian even unto the end of his life. Surely, Jesus died to save from sin, and the Holy Spirit is fully able to carry on His redeeming work.

The word righteousness is very comprehensive, as in Jeremiah xxxiii. 16. It includes both justification and sanctification. In both senses do we trust "the Lord our righteousness." In Christ we have justification, or perfect acquittal before God. In Him we have sanctification of the man, of ourselves. This goes under the term "the Lord our righteousness." "He shall be called" (Jeremiah xxiii. 6), "She shall be called" (Jeremiah xxxiii. 16), by the same gracious name. HE *as the hidden source*, WE *as the gushing life, seen and known of men*. Oh! the sweetness of this living union of Christ in us and we in Him. Hallelujah! Reign in us, thou mighty King of Zion, that as Thou art so may we be in this world, and so may we be called. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, world without end.

The word sanctification is enough, therefore, to express the most comprehensive work of the Di-

vine Spirit, in our likeness to our adorable Master. But the Word of God uses another term, giving, fulness to the meaning of this word, and confirming the doctrine of the saints' resurrection with Christ into a complete newness of life, and restoration of the lost image of Eden. It is that from which comes our term.

2. *Entire Sanctification* — “The very God of peace *sanctify you wholly*: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Many object to this term, but here is the Scripture for it. It is neither an advance nor a retrogression upon the doctrine of the Scripture here quoted. Entirely sanctified and wholly sanctified are the same. But the words of Scripture are stronger than our own term, inasmuch as they comprehend a statement of the extent of this great work of the Holy Spirit and of the blood of Christ — “*Your whole spirit and soul and body preserved blameless.*” What is the obvious meaning of the passage? What but a saint can such an one be proclaimed?

When God hath done such a work for one, when the Apostle's prayer is answered, and the man stands before the Church as having had such a work done within and without him, who shall call him a sinner? Who shall demand of him that he stop his praises to the Lamb “who hath washed him from his sins in His own blood,” and who shall

demand that He confess to God or to men that it is not so, that the work is not done after all? But the sceptic says, "No man has ever seen such a soul." Then we answer, *If it be so, the Apostle's prayer was never answered. God put a desire into his soul, awakened a living want of his being, which was never to be satisfied.* But Paul knew that his praying breath was not spent in vain, and he prayed with assurance that it was the good-will and pleasure of God that His people should "be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke."

Another will tell us that this text "has reference to our condition at the coming of Jesus Christ." Why, then, is the word used which denotes a continuance of the condition? They are to be "*preserved blameless,*" to be placed in this condition, and then preserved in it unto a set time, when Jesus shall "be admired in all them that believe." This word is very strong. If it were man's work to do it, then there might be some doubt as to the result. But the Apostle prays God to do the work, and at the end of the prayer assures the saints that HE will be faithful to do it, to "preserve them blameless in spirit and soul and body."

If we, then, have not Scriptural grounds for the term, "*Entire sanctification,*" theologians, and all Bible students, may as well yield every point which they have held as directly drawn from the Word of God. It is the exact parallel of the term of this

text in Thessalonians. And by it we mean no more than any reader can see to be the plain signification of the words, in their proper connections, and in their Scriptural relations. We are fully persuaded that God loves this term. Oh! that the Church would cherish it, and find its praises extending to the great work which our God is willing to do.

3. Another term is *Perfect Love*. But it stands to declare what God is willing to do for His people in this their earthly state — yes, what He has already done for many whose simple faith took Him at His word. Those who are perfect in love must be viewed in two aspects, as having relation to the two tables of the law. For it is said that “love is the fulfilling of the law.” The grace of love, as “shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us,” meets the demand of both tables. Love of God in all the strength and powers of our being, and love of man as ourselves. And there are not wanting the “few that be saved” both to tell and to exemplify what this shining grace is.

You say that a recipient of perfect love, and whose character is its exponent, will really love God better than his dearest earthly friends, with pantings after his presence, with thoughts necessarily absorbed, with a clear, positive, unflinching zeal in his service, which nothing can weary out in sum-

mer or winter, and an unceasing devotion to his kingdom and glory. Yes, we mean all this—a man wrapped up in God—God his all and in all, and nothing without God.

You say, further, that such a person would be very exemplary before men, and that to man he is, in respect to honesty, honor, sympathy, desire for their welfare, disinterestedness in actions toward them, free from selfishness, and full of real, hearty, and abounding love, a model after the Scripture standard of the Golden Rule, and a living subject of the charity laid down in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians. This is a high standard indeed. But God erected it and not man, and God has commanded men to attain unto it. If the Almighty Lord had stopped here we should be lost inevitably. But the grace to keep the commands is given, and the Holy Spirit takes up His abode in the hearts of the people to transform them into children of light, to spring up within them, and to raise the standard within them to the saintly proportions of its description in Holy Writ.

God the Holy Ghost is love. When He fills the soul and energizes within us, the old Adam must die, the Christ must reign and our souls must be filled with perfect love which casts out all tormenting fear. To say less would be to say that the Holy Spirit's work is necessarily incomplete, and that He can dwell in a heart where lust and sin reign—a doc-

trine contrary to every view of the reigning grace of God, and of "the power that worketh in us," the power of the Holy Ghost, which may be found in the holy word of Divine truth. "Perfect love," therefore, is a necessary term to express, what we may have by the grace of God, what God has provided for us, what Jesus died to secure, and what will make the Church of Jesus Christ-like in her earthly state. *The denial of the privilege of being made perfect in love on this earth, were it on the side of the truth, would make impossible the promised millennial day.*

It may be, as we have hinted, that few such can be found. But we have seen a few of these. They do not shine with kings in earthly palaces; they may be very little and unknown among men; the world does not choose their company. The world hates the things by which they take their stand as the friends of God. They can be well content to wait God's time, to live God's way, to come through much tribulation, and to be called foolish, for their costly devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, in all meekness and simplicity of character. They may well be called little children. They are so little as to care very little about their esteem among men, so they can have His smile which kindles joy among the angels.

If you want to be made perfect in love, dear reader, you must be willing to be little and un-

known, so that you may realize that God who is for us is more than all who can be against us. Oh ! holy joy, when such love has cast out fear !

4. We merely say of another term, which is *Christian Perfection*, that if the candid reader will refer to the Epistle to the Philippians, third chapter, he will find the word perfect in two senses : the one referring to our resurrection perfection (verse 12), and the other (verse 15) referring to the Christian perfection which we must conclude was preached, professed, and lived in apostolic times. "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."

As we a little while ago said, this is not Adamic nor angelic perfection, *but our own in Christ* ; not our own in ourselves, or in any way disconnected with Christ, but *only in Him*

HOLINESS TRANSPARENT.

It must appear to all that holiness is a transparent grace. Not that it betrays any secret of domestic life. Not that it cultivates an intimacy with the marvellous, and is compelled on certain impulses to reveal the thoughts of the mind. Far from it. Holiness does not take away common sense, but cultivates and cherishes it. It cherishes every faculty of the mind, and saves the will from mere flashes of duty-life. But in its character, exhibiting the symmetry of the Christian graces, a reason can be seen for all its acts. It needs no cur-

tain to hide its morality from the public, nor any vain excuse. Its reasons are always good.

Holiness is never a cloak. When you find that any has used it as such, to cover up any deformities of his character, it is a sufficient trial of his spirit. Linger no longer to view his life. Christ is not in such a man, and your utmost scrutiny will not mend your broken confidence. For holiness is not a profession. It is a life, deeply fixed, and rooted in the love of God, and the hatred of evil in every shape and form. You may look for these in the holy person, and you will not be disappointed.

There are those (perfectionists) who hold that they have Christ so formed in them that they cannot sin. But in their life *we see them sin*, doing what we should always call sin. *They say* it is *not*, *in them*, for Christ is in them. Thus they cloak over sin with the name of Christ. We have seen them act more like the devil than like Christ, and yet they say it is not sin. They aver that ere you get into the blissful state which they have attained, you must give up everything to God, even your conscience. So these have given up their conscience.

But our experience tells us that the man who gives up his conscience, as well as the man who gives up his life in suicide, has fallen a prey to the arch-deceiver. God does not want the conscience out of us. He wants it in us, that it may be made, by His Spirit, very tender to the least form of sin.

This is very evident from the words of Holy Writ. "If our heart [*i.e.*, conscience] condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart [conscience] condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God." God wants our conscience, as an inward monitor, to declare to us our condition in His sight. And besides, He has made the consciences of His people answer to one another. One man's conscience is the detector of another's; so that we become, not for selfish motives, nor from any low motive at all, but for the good of each other and for the glory of God, "our brother's keeper."

It is thus that the holy man, the holy minister, the saintly character, poor or rich, is enabled by manifestation of the truth to commend himself or herself to every man's conscience, in the sight of God. And thus, by the tender consciences of the people of God we have a moral cement, which binds them together at the cross of Christ; each one of them realizing the necessity of continually "looking unto Jesus," that he may be free from sin.

Sanctified persons cultivate a tenderness of conscience which makes every sin, and every action which in any other person would be sin, very, yea, infinitely distasteful to us. Then if a holy person should for the time fall into any sin, it would at once rise to his face in blushes. That is what we desire. We do not want even the possibility of hid-

ing the sin which we commit. We desire earnestly to have it so that if we should slide from the law of God it would be detected, by others or ourselves, so that we might fly to the fountain at the first appearance of the stain.

So shall our saintly character be transparent. Men shall see our determination to be the Lord's. There shall be no possibility of being mistaken for hypocrites. Lord give us this transparent life, for Thy praise.

Since it has been answered that I can be holy, that God designed it, that He is able and willing, and since we have clear definition of holiness before us, let us answer the question.

IV. How can I be holy?

And first of all, that the simple-hearted reader may begin with the true spirit, let us ask him,

ARE YOU DETERMINED TO BE HOLY?

"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." This appears to express a principle by which the people of God may expect the blessings of His covenant. If they are "willing and obedient," they shall enjoy the promises. It is *not* "those who are willing to eat the good of the land shall eat it." Imprisoned criminals, in this sense, might be willing to enjoy liberty once more, but the danger is that they would not enjoy it in the way of honesty and honor. They would have

a false liberty; they are not willing to enjoy the liberty of the honest and the true. Many think themselves willing to enjoy the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, but they are not willing to fulfil the conditions of faith.

Determination belongs to the idea of willingness in this connection. If ye be willing, if you are suitably disposed, if your mind is set, if you are determined to be a faithful servant, you may have what you seek. "Then shall we know, *if we follow on to know*, the Lord." In every case the creature is active. God designed that we should use our powers; that we should will, and be responsible for the use of our will. It is the glory of His plan that our will is to be exercised. While we are stoutly opposed to the doctrine of self-will, we must be as stoutly set in favor of the doctrine of free-will in all gracious souls. God willing in them, they may will to do all that can enter into their enjoyment of His promises. They do this constantly. It is a part of the liberty with which the Son makes free. "Awake, thou that sleepest."

When God has done the part that man cannot do, then man is to arise, is to determinately exercise the new life. This applies to every step of our experience. Jesus is *always* "the resurrection and the life." *We* must arise from the dead, we must use the grace. Natures that are slow to act, and those who have misconceptions concerning their activity

in the reception of promised grace, need the determination to obedience. "If ye be willing and obedient," then, becomes, "*if ye are determined to obey.*" In our consecration of everything to God we must not forget to yield up *all inaction*, all improper trust — *e.g.*, we have no right to trust God for believing for us. We must believe for ourselves. Some doubt the doctrine of the higher Christian life from their own failures in it. Their failure has arisen from their own inaction and unbelief. *The use of means must never be laid aside.*

A soul seeking this precious "grace wherein we stand," may suspect that his weakness will be in speaking to sinners of their souls. Now, then, having come to the very point of entrance upon the happy life, he meets a sinner. The blessed, gentle, Holy Ghost gives him a word to say, or whispers, saying, "Go and serve me by speaking to this man." It is evident that if he fail at that point, it is simply in his own withholding to speak promptly. The first thing he must now seek, and determine to find, and find, is the exercise of his own will. Don't delay — delays are dangerous. Go at once, speak at once — whatever you have to do, *do it at once.* "If any man *will* do His will he shall know of the doctrine." *Consecration must determine all the powers for God, or it is defective.* When we are leaning on promised grace, "*I will*" is gospel language. But it is in the heart more than in the

lips. In the divine life, when God is working in us "to will and to do," the utmost decision against sin is to be expected.

Sanctification, therefore, is a setting of our natures in severe opposition to that which has before acted within us to hinder the work of the Lord, whether it be precipitancy or sloth. If our fault has been *precipitancy*, then the determination of our being in the act of consecration will be to "BE STILL" before God. If, on the other hand, the soul has been *slow to move* at the point of duty, the decision of our whole being will be to *seize the first opportunity* to check the *first rising* of the sluggish spirit, to "ARISE AND BE DOING." That is ours to do.

Two powers move in the saints with mighty influence — the will-power and the love-power. They are sweetly blended when everything works harmoniously. In legality the will-power gets the ascendancy, and the consequence is that the error of the foolish Galatians is not far off. But in gospel simplicity the love-power, unrivalled, reigns in sweet harmony with the will. Love says, "Do this," and the will does it upon the well-known prompting. If the love-power thus assert itself, engagements to our God which would otherwise be hard work, (legalist's work), become easy, and exceedingly pleasant.

There is great sweetness in the leading of the

Holy Ghost. Where it was once difficult to stand up in the face of strong opposition, or to the performance of severe labor or the carrying out of strict discipline, it becomes, for *Jesus'* sake, a precious work. Not easy to the flesh indeed ! Mortification of the flesh may be painful, but most cheerfully done, notwithstanding, for Him. The love of Jesus rules. Is any course of conduct seen to be needful for the declaration of His glory ? That love will sweetly determine the will ; and, not the mouth (words are useless here, resolutions are vanity), but the whole being acts out the inward will. And so we "always triumph in Christ" by the power of God. Our ACTION says, "I will." Thus it is that saints become known, and know themselves as persons who WILL DO the will of God at any cost.

Yes, at any cost ! All our powers and property belong to God. All His things (so far as they appertain to us) belong to us. We can now easily say "at any cost." Having laid our all upon His altar, and bound the gift there, our hands entirely taken off from what we once esteemed our own, He has all with our full consent :

" My all to Christ I've given,
My talents, time, and voice,
My self, my reputation ;
The lone way is my choice."

Does the duty of the hour call for a face of

flint? Let the face of flint be set. He that is for us is more than all that can be against us. Our whole being cries out for God in the emergency, and we stand ready to oppose the works of darkness, to rebuke sin, and to do it in the spirit and temper of Christ. Does the engagement (I am not partial to the word duty, as it has often been a sort of Galatian snare) stand at the post of danger? There our being goes for Jesus' sake. Is it only a little thing? To a soul thus determined for Jesus there are no little sins or little engagements. What some would think little sins, are fearful inroads upon the authority of our God, and upon his holiness; what some would name lesser duties stand as parts of our covenant life. We may not with impunity despise the day of small things, nor call the things little by which our God is served or dishonored:

“Think nought a trifle, though it small appear;
Small sands the mountain, moments make the year,
And trifles, life. Your care to trifles give,
Else you may die ere you have learned to live.”

There is an object which will be very often found to set these powers upon their delightful work: “FOR JESUS' SAKE.” He is the “One Altogether lovely.” There is no glow of affection so enkindling, so enrapturing, so exalting into holy action, as His love. There is no charm so great by far in any other name. It carries with it into every

Christian heart holy triumph over everything that could be adverse to spiritual action, that could daunt the zeal of a saint. This only name is better than husband or wife, than brother or sister, than dearest and nearest friend. Let me say to any professor of religion to whom this may not be so, stop at once and have this matter settled. You may, you probably will, be called upon to stand up in behalf of his name, against the feelings and insinuations of your very best friends. The question may occur in ways you do not now expect, which would even astonish you (being unsurrounded by persecuting Jews), "Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?"

Jesus uttered words which *now* call out the question, "Lovest thou me more than these?" "I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." And again, the Master spake to every age of Christians hitherto, "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life FOR MY SAKE shall find it." How inexpressibly precious must Jesus be when he is to be chosen before all, in emergencies which try the heart-strings. This heavenly Bridegroom, this good Shepherd, this Almighty Friend, this Divine Elder Brother, has and shall have the unrivalled place within us. "For Jesus' sake."

Do you ask its significancy? It means that our highest powers are engaged to do or to suffer. It calls forth the most complete subjection of our will. It thoroughly and eternally engages us to leave all, to oppose all, to favor all, to *do* all things, whenever, and under what circumstances soever, these actions are called for. For Jesus' sake! It is my last promotion—the sum of all my former ambition—the goal of my intense desires. “I have found it.” To do, to live, to suffer, to be nothing “*for Jesus' sake*” — this is perpetual bliss — this is eternal youth. When this is at the bottom of the principle, the WILL *will* carry out the “mind that is in Christ.”

If my reader is determined to be a sanctified person, having his all on the altar, to be the Lord's alone, let him see the only way of Holiness, in this :

SIMPLE FAITH AND HOLINESS.

Let us understand the way of simple faith. It is exceedingly simple. Its motto, its life, the life which flows from it, is ONLY JESUS. Without Him it can do nothing, though the strength of years should be laid out ; with him it “can do all things,” though not a hand be put forth upon the task, often found an impossibility. Simple faith—that is, faith without any admixture of looking to means—is fastened to Christ as its “ALL IN ALL.”

It is a very common failure of Christian life to put a large share of trust in the means used. They say they do not trust in the means, but a little examination proves that they expect the means to work out certain results. For example, to be holy, they need to be very regular in all their devotions, constant students of the Word of God, very submissive to his providence ; they must have deep thoughts upon the cross of Christ ; they must be regularly engaged in his service ; they must be full of words and works for the Lord. So they expect to become holier, and so to attain the stature of the fulness of Christ.

It is very true that this is a mention of engagements which every Christian loves, but it is, after all, not God's way of holiness. That is, God has not made any or all of these a help to His own work in the soul, or a substitute for the way of faith. Those who calculate upon the sanctifying nature of these things will find a way which involves far less disappointment and trial, which is full of pleasures, and turns life into a psalm. That way is CHRIST, and these things are rather the marks of sanctification than its helps — they are the fruits of Christ's work, and not His servants in doing it.

Simple faith, instead of looking to these, looks at once and only to Jesus. It trusts Him alone to accomplish the sanctification of the soul. It believes Him for this, as it believed Him for the re-

mission of sins at first. Nothing but His blood could stand for their sins, nothing but his blood could cleanse the record of past sins. None but His Holy Spirit can impart the energy of holiness to the soul ; and that He will give His Holy Spirit to those who ask Him, none need to doubt for a single instant. Simple faith does not doubt it. It takes Jesus at his word, and it presents every word at His throne with entire confidence. It is its province to believe at once that what Jesus promised is done the very moment it rests upon his word. Else it would not be simple faith.

A beautiful representation of it is given in the case of the man with a withered arm. Jesus told him to stretch it forth. He did not at all question. He did not say, "Lord, it is withered. I have not done that for years." But He took the Lord at His word, and stretched it forth. Now, when Jesus tells us to be holy (it cannot be denied that He came to make us holy), He surely should not have the answer, "Lord, I am unholy. I have always been unholy. I never expect to be holy. Though the word enjoins it many times, yet in this life it is out of the question—it is against all my experience and observation." No, do not give that answer to Jesus. Oh ! do not grieve him so ! But go at once and praise Him for the accomplished work. That is simple faith. How else can

we conceive of simple faith? Jesus has said, "Be holy."

How can we be holy? We are just as helpless to be holy as the man with the withered arm was to stretch it out. All our works can never make us holy or holier. They themselves need the blood of atonement. And so with all our thoughts. We need not stop to prove it. Blessed be the name of Jesus Christ, simple faith praises Him for the command, and believes the work accomplished. It is done by the all-powerful Jesus, who reigns in the hearts of His people, and who delivers them from all things "according to their faith." Simple faith believes the word, that "the very God of peace sanctifies us wholly," and "that our whole spirit and soul and body is preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And why does faith take such amazing comforts for such poor, helpless souls? Because it rests on the word of the Holy Spirit, "Faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will do it."

This simple faith is in momentary exercise. It does not believe that holiness which it receives from Christ is infallibility, for this has never been, promised; but it does believe, that, *as it momentarily looks unto Jesus*, it gets the work of the Holy Spirit done within, it keeps the cleansing which it enjoyed at first, and that it is enabled to please God. Enabled. For all the energy of living to

God, and like unto Jesus Christ, comes alone by His own Holy Spirit. Hence, faith trusts his presence, has a sure word of promise to lean upon, and can doubt nothing as to the result.

Christian reader, have you yet entered into this precious rest of simple faith, in which you take Jesus at His word, and trust Him to do in your soul what you have always found impossible? Rest assured that **THE ONLY WAY OF HOLINESS IS CHRIST.** Not means, not exertions, not growth, but Christ and Christ alone. If you have been beset by doubts of your acceptance, by fears of coming evil, by anxieties concerning the future, by burdens of various names, by habitual sins, and yieldings to sin, Christ can help you. Christ can drive out your enemies and His. Let Him do it. Give your all and yourself into His hands. Hold nothing back, but trust Him by simple faith to do with you and all you have according to His own will.

The way of simple faith is a way of rest. It puts all our business on Him, and it is fixed on His promises, which He is able and willing, and even waiting to perform; only waiting for you to believe. He cannot do mighty works for you unless you believe. When you simply rest on Him to do all for you, it will be a rest such as you have never known. Your "peace will be like a river."

We do not disparage means, but we put them in their proper place. Nothing comes before Christ.

Christ first and last ; and true means are simply the result of Christ in you. A man eats because he is alive, because he is in health, and this may be a means of life and health, but he scarcely thinks of using food as a means — it is a consequence of life and health. Let Christ reign triumphant in the soul, and rather than our cultivating the fruits of the Spirit, they shall spring up in a gracious necessity of life, the sign of life, the evidence of life.

“Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me.”
“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

For *Jesus saves His people from their sins*. Not in them. It is therefore the believer's privilege to be free from sin. Not without Jesus, but by His grace. He every moment needs the merit of His death, His presence, His Spirit, and we rejoice that these are secured to him by the promise of Him who “cannot lie.”

Now, every moment having these, is he not cleansed from all unrighteousness? Is he not “meet for the Master's use,” by “this grace wherein he stands”? God says so. “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Surely none of us believe that He is our

righteousness only in a judicial sense, for then we could not at all be prepared for heaven, the enjoyments of which we can never share without holiness.

We all believe that Jesus Christ is our righteousness also in a practical sense. In the judicial sense, He is our justification; in the practical sense, He is our sanctification. These are inseparable. No man can be sanctified without a previous justification through the merits of Jesus Christ, and no man is ever justified without being also sanctified. Thus it is our common privilege "to be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that we might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work." And hence, we are reminded of "giving thanks unto the Father, which *hath made us meet to be* partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

But there are some of the Lord's dear people who do not believe this. They believe that they *will be* made meet when the time comes for them to die. Then according to their faith it must be unto them. If they do not believe it, they cannot be so, because the whole of our salvation is by faith. "We walk by faith, not by sight." They believe they are sanctified, but not wholly; and so it is in their case: they are not wholly sanctified, nor can they be, without faith in Him who "work-

eth in us to will and to do." But what is sanctification to them? It is, with respect to actual sin, a being "enabled more and more to die unto" the habit of sinning.

That is the doctrine of men, but with deep affection we must say that it is not the doctrine of the Word of God. According to that precious Book, the new creature is *already* "*dead to sin*," "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." The "newness of life" here referred to is doubtless the restored image of God in "knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness." This new creature views all old things as passed away, and gets its daily, hourly, momentary nourishment from its vital union with its Root, its living Head, Christ. Now it is by faith that this union gives its blessed effects to the children of God. To speak very plainly, they believe in God to do it for them, and he honors their faith. They receive just what they believe they will receive, for such is the promise.

The proclamation to saints that they are sinners, and the embracing of the word "sinner" as expressive of our own condition, is, therefore, a systematic cultivation of unbelief. We are not sinners in the sense of active transgression of the law, if we are receiving out of the fulness of Christ Jesus "grace

for grace." By no means. He is just then SAVING US FROM SIN. And we should give Him the glory.

If the person sin in deed, and know it, then he is not receiving the grace of Christ. You ask me, "How can I believe that Christ saves me from sin, when I see the sin?" Well, reader, suppose that the impotent man had said, "How can I rise and walk, when I am so utterly helpless? Do you not see, Lord, that I am unable?" The fact was, when Jesus wrought his miracles, that men believed they were cured. And so does the convicted sinner rest in Christ out of the most doleful confusion of his past sins. He says at first, "How can I believe my sins are forgiven, when the Lord is making me feel the misery of them? How can I believe until *He makes me feel* that they are forgiven?" The poor soul finding this to be no way for comfort, at last simply believes God's Word, that they are forgiven, against former appearances, and then comes the joy of his salvation.

It must be so in the way of sanctification by faith. God says, "Ye are complete in Him." Man says, "Yes, I am judicially complete, Lord, but I am practically very incomplete." The believer there takes upon himself a very great inconsistency. For in the way of the Lord there is no such inconsistency. He has not told us that it must inevitably be so. He has not acquitted us at His judgment seat, with the previous contemplation,

of having us condemned by our practice. Our justification and sanctification are placed together by the divine hand, and when man undertakes to separate them, he plunges himself and others into union with a wretched body of death. In other words, while he is married to Christ, he becomes united to the law and works, and hence feels the sorrow of legalism, the sorrow of leaving the true spouse, Christ. (Rom. vii.) He was alive without the law in Christ; he is now reduced again to wretchedness when the commandment comes, and sin revives, and he dies to this holy life.

The divine union of justification with sanctification is seen in Rom. v. 1-5. Here is justification and peace with God in the first verse, a practical standing in grace and joy of hope in the second verse, followed in the third, fourth, and fifth verses by the most prominent marks of a deeply sanctified experience, and all as a result of His abounding grace, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

All this, the restoration of the image of God, beautiful in His sight among the ruins of the fall; is the work of Jesus, the privilege of every believer, and the preaching of less than this is the preaching of a partial gospel.

My soul melts within me, my heart boils up, as I write this truth of God, a heaven begun below. Beloved, infinite weakness ourselves, His strength

in us shall be great ; ignorance ourselves, his wisdom brings to us the enjoyment of the very powers of the world to come. It is Jesus, only Jesus, praise his dear name !

“ Jesus all the day long
Is our joy and our song.”

ONLY BELIEVE. WE WILL THEREFORE REMEMBER
THE BELIEVER'S FOUNTAIN.

Every house is provided with water — water for drinking, water for cleansing. What would the house be without its fountain? And the house is most to be chosen, all other things being equal, which has the best fountain accommodations. In that house you expect to find none that are thirsty, and no want of cleanliness.

So every believer has a fountain. He has a fountain in God, and one in himself. All this is of grace, since we love Him because “He first loved us.” Let no man think and act as though his resources were in himself. For they are not. He can have no good in himself whatever, since all his strength is weakness, his wisdom foolishness, and his beauty like the passing cloud. This the most godly continually confess, and those nearest to God, and most active in his Church, cry out, “All my springs are in Thee.” Not by his own works then, but by grace, the believer has this twofold fountain.

1. He has a fountain in God. “God is my hab-

itation, whereunto I continually resort." The resources of the Christian, as stored up in God, are infinite. In God he knows no want. "IN THE WORLD ye shall have tribulation." "These things have I spoken unto you, that IN ME ye might have peace." The secret spring of that peace, which betokens atonement, supply, and the command of all needful things, is alone in God. Everything in God.

As we by nature are utterly unclean, our cleansing is in Him. Hence, we know God as He is revealed to us in the glorious plan of salvation. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. In God the Father we have pardon and acceptance; because in Jesus Christ the Son we have the cleansing blood, without which "there is no remission;" and in the Holy Ghost we have divine application of the blood of Christ, and of the divine power for all needful things, besides that by Him we are made "partakers of the divine nature." Why do any stay away from God because they are not clean enough? Oh, come and get purity in God! It dwells nowhere but in Him, and you cannot get it away from Him.

"Is he a fountain? There I bathe
And heal the plagues of sin and death;
These waters all my soul renew,
And cleanse my spotted garments too."

If we have cleansing in Him, of what can we

be denied? O believers! is God our fountain? Yea, God himself! How mean to be delighted from any other sources of comfort! As mean in us as they are perishing. "Be astonished, O ye heavens! at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate," saith the Lord. "For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken ME, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

2. The believer has also a fountain in himself. For the great God has also proclaimed that "He will dwell in them and walk in them." "I live," said Paul, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." God the Holy Ghost, the divine representative of the Lord Jesus, and one with Him, dwelleth in us, and so Jesus now graciously performeth His word unto us in these Gospel days. And He always applies within us the works of Jesus. As Jesus on the cross cried out, "It is finished," so the Holy Ghost saith to them, when they believe, that the work is finished in them. "He that believeth on me," as the Scripture hath said, "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This spake He of the Spirit, which they that "believe on Him should receive."

Believer, are you conscious of this fountain within your soul, "springing up unto everlasting life"? And are you conscious of the ever-present cleansing by a Saviour's blood? Then is your soul free

from "the world, the flesh, and the devil." If not, are you in your right mind?

THE DIVINE METHOD OF MAKING US HOLY IS SEEN
IN TWO THINGS.

God's words are not ambiguous. Nothing can enter heaven which "worketh abomination or maketh a lie," nor any "fearful," or "unbelieving." Is it possible that we are left without hope? No, it is not possible. God says we must be holy on earth, and has *made full provision* for it. In this great salvation the Lord Jesus has done *two things* for us. These two things are the purchase of His precious blood; they are inseparable.

The first of these goes under the name of *imputation*. Imputation of His righteousness is the reckoning of His blood upon the books of judgment. It cancels all the sins recorded against us. It is a perfect work, so that not one of the old sins can stand. However dreadful the crime, it is remembered no more. The blood which Jesus spilled is upon the books, and this is God's way of putting our sins behind His back. So we are free from the old sins, and they can never rise against us any more, unless indeed we depart from God. The reckoning of imputation covers not only past sins but the natural infirmities of our fallen humanity — our weakness, our incompleteness, and everything in our natural constitution, which unfits us

from that most perfect conformity to the law, which we may suppose belongs to angelic or Adamic character. This must be so, else we could never be made the "righteousness of God in Him," nor could it be once said that we are "complete in Him." And so, by imputation, the records of the past and the constitutional incompleteness of the past and of the future, in other words, our weakened powers, all find completeness.

This imputation is the first thought in our salvation, and a very important part of it, *but not the whole of it*. If this were all, we should perish, for it puts in us no righteousness. It is a work outside of us. It is a work on the past record and for our passive humanity. It has no reference to future and active transgression. God has provided otherwise for that. For our salvation is not forensic, but a real, and present, and full salvation. It is not a work done only in heaven, but done both in heaven and in us. In heaven we are justified from past sins and from fallen powers ; on earth we are sanctified from future sins, according to the promise, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you."

The *second* thing is the *impartation of Himself*, by His divine Agent, the Holy Ghost. Without this, imputation would be only half a salvation. With this, it is full. These, then, are the two words

that express what Jesus has done for us, IMPUTATION and IMPARTATION. The latter expresses His own indwelling. And if Christ dwell within us, who shall describe the glorious results? What can He not do, what has he not promised to do in the way of filling us with righteousness? If we try to cleanse ourselves we shall be unfit for His dwelling, but if we believe He will cleanse us, and if we give up the work to Him He will see it well done. He will make our souls fit for God to dwell in. He will complete the work in sovereign power. This is the only way. Do not try to cleanse your own hearts. You cannot even see how much evil there is in them. Do not try it yourself.

“Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus’ feet ;
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete ” —

complete in all the will of God, His blood completely imputed, His spirit completely imparted, your soul completely at rest from sin, and God complacent with you for the righteousness of the law fulfilled in you through an indwelling Christ. So the *inward* struggle with sin is ended. God meant it should be. He meant we should be free with the glorious liberty wherewith the Son makes free. Free indeed. Free from sin and from every burden. *And thus the inner man being free from*

struggles, we can easily go out and fight the powers of darkness.

There is much of this to be done. The Apostles had it to do. We may well suppose that they would have sunk under their load, if they had had both inward and outward foes to contend with. But the inward were all conquered by Christ's divine inworking. He shone within their souls with heavenly light, and entirely scattered the darkness which sin had made, and this light was their joy. Christ within ! Oh, what can He not accomplish for one who simply trusts Him ? "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusted in Thee." "In whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Yes, glory within, and victory without, the work of an all-conquering Saviour, by whom our enemies "shall not be able to resist the wisdom and the spirit" with which we shall speak.

Believers, on whom do you trust ? On Jesus only ? Then you will be wonderful persons. For He is wonderful in working, strong in power ; not one faileth of all that He undertaketh. Now do not act as if it were Jesus and you. You have nothing to do in the matter of cleansing your soul but to trust to Him. "*This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He hath sent.*" No, it is Jesus only.

This view of the impartation of the Holy Spirit explains what has hitherto been the cause of much objection. Christians tell us we grow into this state of holiness, and that we must be wrong in holding that any can, by one act, ascend the mount which has cost others years of toilsome struggling. But here it is seen that we lay down everything and all effort of our own, that the Almighty Workman may work His miracle of grace. A miracle is always wonderful—and this transition into holiness is always a miracle. Those very souls who had spent years of toilsome struggling were at last made holy by a miracle—the very same as in our own case. All their previous struggling was not faith; it was unbelief.

They ought to have had that inward struggle ended long before, that they might have gone out as good and strong soldiers to “endure hardness” with a foe whom no living man, save the God-man, has ever yet conquered alone. This inward work is done immediately, because God does it. Away, then, with the trash, the vanity, the pomp, the glitter of this world; consecrate all to Him, and let Him at once make you a free man, HOLY, AND WHOLLY HIS OWN.

AN OBJECTION ANSWERED.—LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

In a conversation with some brethren, the writer made the remark that he did not call a “saint” a

“sinner.” One of the brethren asked me whether I did not count myself a sinner? I answered thus: “My precious Saviour keeps me from actual sins.” I believed then, nor is my faith changed, that that answer was of the Lord.

Some time after the utterance of that answer, I received, from one who only sought my welfare in writing it, the following communication, headed by the above answer, and let me state that my reason for presenting this communication as well as my answer, is, that it contains the most natural objections to the position which I hold, so that the two together may assist in illustrating the precious experience of which I write:

“ ‘ My precious Saviour keeps me from actual sins.’

“On what Scriptural grounds does any believer now rank his experience above or in a ‘higher life’ than that recorded of God’s saints of all ages, ‘of whom the world was not worthy,’ and whose lives are unerringly recorded for our ensamples? *e.g.*, Noah—Did he not ‘walk with God perfect in his generation’? Is there not actual sin written of him after this testimony of God Himself? Abraham—did he not believe God so that it ‘was counted to him for righteousness,’ etc., etc.? Is there not the same record, and afterwards? Sarah, Isaac, Jacob? Is it not the same?

“Moses? Did he talk with God as friend to

friend? What kept him from the promised land? Sampson, Jephtha, what of them? David, 'after God's own heart'? Peter? 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.' Paul, 'chief of sinners.' 'When I would do good,' etc., etc. Daniel, 'confessing my sin,' and others everywhere.

"Query. Did the spirit of inspiration rightly apprehend and portray lives of men greatly beloved, 'looking unto Jesus,' yet actually committing such sins? Does my brother rightly apprehend his own life in dreaming it higher than that of these memorable men of God, written by God Himself, in His own Word?

"We shall be like Him (our precious Jesus) when we shall see Him as He is. Meantime, much better with beloved Daniel confess our sins, with Peter weep bitterly over our shortcomings. We have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, *i.e.*, he had not and has not sin. We had and have sin.

"Does your view agree with the standards of the Church?"

My answer to the above was as follows :

NEW YORK, Sept. 21, 1866.

"My precious Saviour keeps me from actual sins."

I am not prepared to say that He does not so

keep me, for that would be gainsaying my most positive, conscientious convictions. If he cannot do it, or will not do it, or never does it, then we are preaching in vain that the help of the inebriate backslider is only in his Saviour, and the help also of every Christian in keeping himself "unspotted from the world" is solely and alone as he looks to Jesus.

I have not for a moment engaged in "dreaming my own life higher than that of those memorable men of God, written by God Himself in His own Word." I have never said I could not fall. On the contrary, God is my witness that my lips could never say as fully as they do at this precise point of time: "I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means when I have preached to others I myself would be a cast-away." If you have met any true believer who "ranked his experience above or in a 'higher life' than that recorded of God's saints," I certainly cannot be that one, for I have never met you upon this subject without disclaiming that position.

My "higher life" experience is, that it is higher than any I ever enjoyed before. And as for fourteen years I have occupied a post of observation in the pastoral office, in my measure (which, in deep humility be it said, both for the people and for myself, was probably somewhat above them in spiritual things)—in my measure "discerning all

things" — I conclude that the people might and are privileged to live a much higher life also.

How might they live a higher life — how might any live a higher life than they do? There is only one way. "Looking unto Jesus." "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." How shall he lay aside every weight but by "looking unto Jesus"? How shall he lay down the sin which doth so easily beset him, but by "looking unto Jesus"? How shall he run with patience, but by an intent and constant "looking unto Jesus"? If he does not look unto Jesus, will he not fall like Peter?

Was David "looking unto Jesus" when he put an evil eye upon Bathsheba? Was Noah "looking unto Jesus" when he closed his eyes with strong drink? Was Moses "looking unto Jesus" when in anger he smote the rock and gave not God the glory? And would there not have been power and willingness in Jesus, by His blood and Spirit, to have kept them from these awful failures?

Faith may have existed in these as the children of God, in its principle, but surely it was not in exercise. Peter was not exercising faith when he denied his Lord. I call his denial of Christ, for which he wept bitterly, more than a "shortcom-

ing," for it was in itself, and was connected with the most loathsome sins of the profane.

As before, so now let me repeat, that I believe it is not impossible for one living in the higher grades of Christian experience, which is the "higher life," to fall into sin. His sin will be in proportion to his want of that gracious habit of "looking unto Jesus." It surely cannot be said that David was acting "after God's own heart" in his sins, or that God or man approved them. But it is said that this man, "after God's own heart," did fall into condemnation. But "there is no condemnation to those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

As to the confession of sin in Daniel, and in Paul when he called himself the chief of sinners, I know of no Christian experience which casts out confession. Vain man, to throw it out, when the very heavens in which He dwells are not clean enough for God? But it certainly is not believed that when Paul wrote these words he meant to say that he was the chief of actual sinners, that while he was writing those words he was chief of the sinning ones who are "led captive by Satan at his will." Impossible. If so he surely never could have written those words. That he gratefully acknowledged the mercy of Jesus in saving such a

sinner, and thus desired to encourage all sinners to come to Jesus, I believe. But I must further believe that Paul counted himself, and desired to have it so understood in that passage, "The chief of sinners saved." Saved from what? From the awful sins, and their terrible guilt and pollution.

That Jesus can and does keep those who intently look to Him from sinning, from breaking out into actual, known, and therefore wilful, acts of sinning, I most fully believe. If not, then there is no power by which we may "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." If Jesus does not do it for us, then there is no such thing as keeping "unspotted from the world," and then there is no such thing as being "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke."

Then how shall we "reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord? Surely not by looking into our hearts; for every look into our own hearts warns us that there is no good in them, — that by looking within we have no power to cleanse. No, but by "looking unto Jesus." Let a bold faith in the power of Christ who commands it (as he commanded the man with a withered arm), so "reckon yourself dead indeed unto sin," and "alive to God," that sin shall be no more. It was not a reckoning from appearances, when the man's arm was

made whole, else it had remained as helpless as ever; but it was a reckoning of a bold faith in the Redeemer's almighty power to save it. So my soul "reckons" herself "dead" by the power of Christ and my "life hid with Christ in God." Oh, then, my soul, by "looking unto Jesus," "let not sin, therefore, reign in my mortal body that I should obey it in the lusts thereof."

I have examined the articles of doctrine, and though I do not wish to take my creed from any man, I yet can truly say, as I at present read them, I believe them in accordance with the Word of God. "To the law, and to the testimony," my soul flies with exceeding great delight. "His words are found and I do eat them, and they are the joy and rejoicing of my heart." God bless you, and bring us near together, by bringing us nearer and nearer to Christ.

"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Yours in the precious Jesus.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS—THE PRESENT CURE OF SIN.

"Looking unto Jesus" is the whole of our salvation. Why, then, for comfort, for policy, for peace, for satisfaction, or for the profit of our souls, should

we look to any other? Jesus is the unfailing Sender of our comfort by the promised Holy Spirit; Jesus is the Captain of our salvation as well as the Head of the Church, to start, carry out, guide us in the true plan of Church order. He is our peace, having made peace between God and us, and having filled us — or promised to our faith the filling — with a peace which passeth knowledge. Jesus is the only satisfying portion of the soul, which He does indeed satisfy as with marrow and fatness — a satisfaction as real as that enjoyed in heaven, of which we here have an earnest in His presence. It is, therefore, to our exceeding great joy that we be continually “looking unto Jesus.”

A minister once wrote a sermon upon the text, “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.” He long considered it his best sermon, preached it in many places, and he thought the best part of the sermon was under the question “how slowness to anger and the ruling of the spirit may be attained;” yet all the time, though he told the people how to attain it, he had been unsuccessful himself. And well he might, for it was a system of works after all. The sermon answered the question in four lessons. *First*, the hearer was to obtain a knowledge of himself. *Second*, he must examine himself to the above end. *Third*, he

must practise self-denial. *Fourth*, he must depend on divine grace.

Thus was the believer to subject himself to a long and tedious course of culture, by which, in some coming time, he might hope to have the mastery over his spirit. No comfort was given to the poor strugglers in case of death before they accomplished the victory. They must die in defeat, with the sorrowful fact before them that they could not be cured of slavery to their passions in their lifetime. *The same minister has learned a better way, a present cure for the sin-sick, or sin-weakened soul.* In place of all the four lessons, which have been many times applauded as well put together and calculated to do good, he has made one lesson alone — *only one* — and that the simplest one of all that could be found, adapted to give victory to the child in Christ, as well as to dispel the sorrows of older disciples whose trials to rule their own spirits have so long and so signally failed.

What is that one lesson, reader, so potent when all the self-mortifications and legal strivings of accumulated years have only increased the difficulty, or created another disease? Simply and alone “LOOKING UNTO JESUS.” Beloved, He who has all power in heaven and earth is formed in us the hope of glory. He is the power by whom we shall conquer, without whom we can do nothing. It is

even Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, who conquers within us.

Why, then, wait for victory over sin until we die. Have it in Jesus now. Let the Holy Spirit cleanse His own temple, and dwell in it with power. It shall be heaven begun below. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

LOOKING UNTO JESUS STILL. JESUS ALL IN ALL.

"Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." — HEB. xii. 2.

There is a race to be run. A cloud of witnesses are viewing. The racers are to cast weights and besetting sins aside, else they will lose the race. A goal is in full view. A crown is at the goal, waiting to be put upon the winner. The goal is Jesus Christ. The crown is glory with Him for ever. If we would not be moved into any digression, we must look unto Jesus, as the racer in former times looked straight forward to the end of his course, where was the goal and the crown, and the rest, and the glory. If, therefore, there is any statement of this race to be made in few words, which will express at the same time the continuous habit of the racer, the bent of his mind, the desire of his soul, the determined purpose to which he is devoted with unfaltering perseverance, and his energy, it is in these words: "LOOKING UNTO JESUS."

But now in this Christian race, where the *run-*

ning of the soul and the *looking of the soul* are expressed; where the soul is so weak by sin that it cannot of itself lay aside weights and sins, and cannot of itself run a race, we must see a peculiar meaning to the term, "looking unto Jesus." For nothing has been more plainly revealed, or more fully experienced by a saintly soul, than our *naturally* prostrate, helpless, and dead condition. We cannot do anything; we cannot even look to the blessed Lamb of ourselves. There must be something more than the mere stimulus of future reward to enable us for the prosecution of this race. Scripture authority for this position is not needed, for it is admitted on every hand that without Him we can do nothing. There was a deep meaning, therefore, in the insertion of this Christian formula, in his exhortation to run the race. The apostle would not only have us look to Him as the One altogether lovely, or the one at the end of the race with whom we are to rest in glory at last, or the chief object of our desire alone. All these, and more!

Two questions here demand the serious attention of all who would perceive the meaning of this great Christian formula:

I. Who and what is Jesus to the Christian racer?

II. What is meant by "*Looking unto Jesus*" in this spiritual sense?

I. Who and what is the Lord Jêsus to the Christian racer ?

Let it be carefully observed that He is, in connection with this race, called "*The Author and Finisher of our faith.*" This may mean that He is the Originator of our doctrine of salvation, and of the appliances of that great system by which we are brought into heaven. But it must necessarily mean more, since in that case we should be left without strength to use the things which had been freely bestowed. It must mean that He bears a personal relation to each racer as such ; that he who has entered this Christian race has entered into a system of operations which are the offspring of the Redeemer's mind. Jesus is at the goal to encourage us on, and feels a personal interest in those who have started in the holy way.

The Lord Jesus, by His Spirit, has inclined us to enter this path. He made the way by His own suffering, so that we might run to glory. He kindly invited us in — yea, sweetly forced us in — and said to us as we entered, "I AM THE WAY." Over the gate we entered, and along every step of the way we see His name. The name of the way itself, as it has been pronounced by the thousands who have already reached the glorious end, and thousands more now on the road, is, "ONLY JESUS." His ministers cry aloud, and spare not to say to every discouraged soul, "*Only Jesus,*" and to warn every

legalist who hopes to enter heaven by his own merits, that the only way there is Jesus Christ. Each racer, therefore, in this heavenly course is to look unto Him as his faithful and *efficient* SAVIOUR.

Now, we all know that *Jesus* means *Saviour*. He saves you. If you had been rescued from drowning by one who had brought your almost lifeless form to land and to life, you would not say that he merely *helped* you. Jesus has done more. In this salvation He has *done* all. You have accepted Him to *save* you, yourself helpless and undone. And if He has done everything thus far, He must continue to do everything to the last. He has promised to raise up the souls that trust Him at the last day, in the completion of His glorious work by which we are and shall be made forever to drink the river of His pleasures.

The Lord Jesus, then, is everything to the Christian racer. And the racer, having no strength of his own, being nothing of himself, *does not only look to Jesus for one thing, but for everything*. For merit to enter, for provisions on the route, for all things within him, and all things without him — yes, for all things *within him* and all things *without him* !

1. We look to Jesus as our *Pattern*. We shall be like Him when we shall see Him as He is, and now are "*with Him*," that men may say, as they see our present measure of likeness to Him, that we have been with Jesus. The highest ambition

of the saint is to be like Him, to possess His mind, and show the marks of that mind by all consistent holy living, and all Christ-like features.

That He is presented to us as an example, we have many passages of the Word of God to show. He left us an "example, that ye should follow in His steps." (1 Pet. ii. 21.) "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another ; *as I have loved you*, that ye also love one another." (Jno. xiii. 34.) "If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought *also* to wash one another's feet." (Jno. xiii. 14.) "Take my yoke upon you and *learn of me*." (Matt. xi. 29.) Christians love to look at Him as their model. They long after a life of conformity to His life in all holy things. It is their unceasing prayer that they may be correct imitators of Jesus Christ, because He has left us as His representatives to go and tell others concerning Him, and by His grace to show them patterns of holy life in the name of their exalted Head.

"Go follow your Master, then," says the careless world. Ah ! if this were all, we die. For it is freely admitted that no one can copy the pattern ; that none have the strength to put forth such actions, and live such a life as Jesus lived. We freely confess that we are feebleness itself. If God had left us here, and still assured us, as He has, that only the holy can see His face, we should have sunk

down to black despair. But while it is true that none can copy the perfect pattern of Jesus by any efforts which mortal man can possibly put forth, *is also true that He himself, indwelling with His saints, can reproduce His own life in them, and make them meet for His service, and meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. And here is the only, but it is the grand, encouragement of our Christian life.* It is the only way by which we can work out our salvation with fear and trembling, for *He worketh in us to will and to do.* If He did not thus, we could not live holy lives at all. Hence we observe, as a necessary complement of the thought that Jesus is our pattern, that —

2. We look to Jesus also as our *Power* — our power, or the power which our faith appropriates for the reproduction of His own life ; so that in life and in conversation we may be His witnesses — “trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.” By our faith appropriating the power, we mean simply that we believe Jesus does in our souls as He said He would. And when we so believe, Jesus does the work by sending His Spirit to show us Himself, and to work within us all Christ-like dispositions. It is then that we keep His commandments, and dwell in Him and He in us ; and “we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit [or disposition of mind] which He hath given us.”

The term "Author and Finisher," taken in its connection with our salvation, and with our faith, it must be seen, has deep meaning ; and that not only in regard to the decree of God that we should be holy, but in relation to our own consciousness of a glorious fact in our present experience. He is the Finisher of our faith *in power*. So it is not a dead faith, it is not an unfruitful faith ; it is an internally productive faith by its constant apprehension of an indwelling Christ, its energizing Author and Finisher. And thus, beloved, we carry about with us (to speak with deepest reverence) a DIVINE WORKMAN. "*And we are His workmanship.*"

All this — that we have believed, that we do believe, that we hate sin, that we are saints appearing in the garments of His righteousness (which means that we bear a character for righteousness which the world acknowledges), all this — that we are full of "perfect peace," of "perfect love which casteth out fear," of "joy unspeakable and full of glory," of the rest of faith, that we glory in tribulations, that we are become as simple as children, with all the sharp corners of a patronizing, worldly, unholy, ambitious spirit taken off ; in holy unity with all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity, high or low, rich or poor, black or white ; sitting lamb-like, to hear each what the other has to say ; telling about Jesus, comforted, the poorest of us feeling rich in

Him ; oh, how rich ! — *all this is the direct result of His workmanship.*

When, with deep simplicity, by a thorough consecration to Him, you rest on Him to do His work within you, you shall find that He works like a God.

1. He teaches an infallible knowledge, showing us things deep and high, altogether out of the sight-range of careless, worldly, unbelieving, fossilized souls, who act as though He stood responsible for them in their carelessness. It is the creed of some that the imputation of the righteousness of Christ makes them judicially fit for heaven though they remain practically very far from God. But God's salvation is nothing so incomplete, and hence we are living in an age which bears for its name the thought of our millennial completeness in Christ. It is the age of the Holy Spirit's work. It is the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. It is now the time of fulfilment of that wonderful word of Jesus : " I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever : even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him ; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." This is that which Jesus said when, in that *great* day of the feast, " Jesus stood and cried, saying [*and wondrous words are these !*], If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth in

me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive ; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (Jno. xiv. 16, etc., and vii. 37-39.)

What is there in all the range of human thought like this knowledge? The Word of God was not designed for statements of science ; they pale before its own infinitely mysterious subjects, which are hidden from a man so far as he is carnally minded. The princes of this world know not such knowledge as Jesus reveals to the simple souls that lean not to their own understanding.

But Jesus as a power within us is not only a teacher of great things.

2. He is a priest and a king *within us*, as well as outside of us. The casting out of the traders from the temple was a symbolic action. He was and is Lord of His house. But *that* house is long since decayed. Where is now His house? In the souls of His people ! "Ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost." "Which is in you." "Which ye have of God." "And ye are not your own." "For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

How glorify God in our body and our spirit? By letting Jesus be exalted in our hearts a prince and a Saviour, to do His priestly and His kingly work

with us in bringing every thought in captivity to His own obedience ; that He “ may sanctify you wholly ” and preserve your whole spirit, and soul, and body blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ ; that He may “ make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight,” so that we may “ serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.”

All this is Jesus to do within us that our light may shine. *All this is Jesus to us, as “ the Author and Finisher of our faith.”* And He is all this to us —

BY HIS BLOOD AND SPIRIT. These go together. The blood of Christ and the Spirit of Christ are inseparable in the economy of redemption. He that hath the blood hath the Spirit, and he that has the Spirit has the blood, and he that has not the Holy Ghost has not the blood of Christ at all. *And these are the two complementary parts of our salvation.* It was expedient that Jesus should go away that the Spirit might come. It was expedient and necessary that He should go and die for the coming of the Holy Ghost — the thenceforth purchased Holy Ghost ! — that through the blood of the everlasting covenant the Spirit might do His office work in making us perfect. And so we have the complementary parts of our salvation, in the specific work of both the blood and the Spirit.

By the one we have imputation, and by the other active impartation of Himself. The blood without the Spirit would only cleanse the record, and so the Spirit complements the work by carrying out the design of Christ to work within us all righteousness. Understand me. Imputation is a reckoning. God reckons our past sins as cancelled by the blood of Jesus ; and God the Father with God the Son sends the Divine Spirit, God the Holy Ghost, to live within us, that we by faith may be enabled to mind the precious precept, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." It is therefore understood by us, as His called and chosen saints, that He, the precious Jesus, "the Sender and the sent," is the efficient Cause, Operator in, Educator, and final Preserver of our souls.

Therefore we consider the formula "looking unto Jesus," both as used here and elsewhere, to express — first, all power to run the race ; second, the habit of the racer. Let us look at *the habit of the Christian racer* in the second general question which we proposed in the outset.

II. What is meant by "*looking*" ("unto Jesus") in this spiritual sense ? We take a few of the plain invitations which direct the sinner and the sinner saved to the reception of heavenly gifts.

1. *Isaiah* xlv. 22 : "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth : for I am God, and there is none else." The Lord would have the attention of all people diverted from idols to Himself

as the only source of salvation, yea, as the only Saviour. He wants men to understand that they are helpless, and that all their trusts are misplaced, which are not placed in Himself alone, and that all the imaginations of men about their salvation, outside the fact that it is His own work, are vain and worse. O ye sinners! know that salvation is the Lord's work, and not yours. *Look*, therefore, unto Him, *and let Him save you. Trust* Him to save you, without trying to have idols or services to save you.

2. *John* i. 29 : "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Here is the direct presentation of the cleansing blood. All other offerings are vain. Should you offer the fruit of your body for the sin of your soul, or pour your own life's blood out because you feel yourself undone, it would be of no avail. Away with all thought of your own merit before God. Behold God's Lamb! That is the merit which He will accept, and that alone. See His willingness to be presented as your substituted merit. Go, therefore, to God, and present to Him for your acceptance at His throne the name of the Lamb of God. Oh, how quickly shall God speak your peace and your everlasting life!

3. *Isaiah* xv. 10 : "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon

his God." The Lord does not want His people to be in darkness. He would have them enjoy His light. Let them *trust* Him. *Let them take Him at His word, and enter by Jesus the door into Himself, their house of habitation.* Jesus is the door into our Father's house, which is all light, all love, all spiritual luxury, all holy company. "God is my habitation, whereunto I continually resort." What darkness can blind me in my holy house, in God my Fortress, my High Tower, my Deliverer? What devil can take me, when I am in my Father's palace, where devils can never reach?

Now looking to God through Jesus Christ is believing all His word says of Him, and trusting Him as such. Looking is "coming." It is "drawing near." "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. x. 22). Looking is taking Christ for what He is offered for in His word.

Again. *Since we take God at His word, and believe that is done which He says is done when we believe,* we must be convinced, that "looking unto Jesus" is the same as washing in the Gospel fountain, and being cleansed thereby. Zech. xiii. 1: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." The fountain is opened. Jesus' blood shed for sinners is the

fountain. Come, and by faith plunge into the purple flood, and rise in all the life of God. One look to Jesus is the washing of your sins away. For one look to Jesus brings Him at once into your heart. He is there the Author and Finisher of your faith. He will own you, and the cloud of witnesses will see you as His bright representative, however the world and a careless Church may despise you. O beloved ! this simple believing, looking to Jesus, by the contrite heart, is everything we have to do. The word is *not* look, and then try to make something out of yourself ; but it is look, and let Jesus do everything with you and for you. *Look and live.* Look and be all, look and have all, look and Jesus is your all and in all.

Beloved, *looking to Jesus is the running of the race.* We run the faster and the surer as we the more intently look unto Jesus. We cease to run the race if we cease to look.

CHAPTER III.

STONES IN THE WAY TO BE GATHERED OUT.

“Go through, go through the gates ; prepare ye the way of the people ; cast up, cast up the highway ; GATHER OUT THE STONES ; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh ; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. And they shall call them, the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord : and thou shalt be called, sought out, a city not forsaken.” Isaiah lxii. 10-12.

And now let us take up some of these stones in the way of believers, and in the way of objectors, and by the Word of God fling them out of sight. They have hindered many a traveller, and kept the bread and water of life from many a hungry and thirsting soul.

I. There are some *hymns* that have taken hold of the hearts of God's people, as though by inspiration, which cultivate unbelief alarmingly, and are quoted in place of Scripture to disprove the doctrine of a higher Christian life. They are hurtful,

and should be left unsung and unused ; for if some of them do apply to a portion of the Lord's people, the whole Church should not be asked to help that small portion sing itself into the condition of sorrow and fear ; or, if the majority of the Church sing them, they certainly will bear to be reminded of the fearful tendency of their songs. Dearly beloved of the Lord, if these do utter what ought not to be the condition of the Lord's chosen, help us, in the Spirit of Christ, to cast out this great stone from the way of the Lord to the people, and from the way of the people to the Lord. This, you know, is our part of the work, not the Lord's. He waits that His people may remove this obstruction to their faith. Let us look at only a few of these hurtful hymns, in the hope that the Lord's dear people may be moved to "gather out the stones" in their way.

HYMNS THAT HURT.

In all ages, the hymns sung in the Church have had much to do with moulding the thought of the people. In times of war, or when great issues are to be presented, much is calculated upon the songs of the people, and songs are gotten up to educate the mind, and turn the views of men in the proper direction. Without a doubt, hymns make doctrines and produce thought. How needful, therefore, to have the hymns right, that the sentiment sung may

have proper embodiment in "forms of sound words." But many hymns teach nothing; others teach error; while some, under cover of the pathetic and sympathetic, protect the worst form of error, which is unbelief in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As our hymn-books are given out by authority, and therefore supposed to be carefully guarded from all error, this defect is the more serious, because many private members incline to receive them at the hands of their spiritual leaders, with almost absolute confidence. And why should they not? say they, for the sentiments expressed have a true type in the common experiences of Christians. But if the common experiences of Christians are wrong by reason of positive unbelief or early training, then the hymns which cultivate their error should, by all means, be either expunged or they should be changed to express the "truth as it is in Jesus." For God wants the instruments of His temple worship to be of pure gold. Many of these hymns express what no Christian ought to feel — coldness, deadness, and almost hypocrisy — under the view that it is a needful confession of sin. The hymn commencing,

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly dove,"

has just two stanzas fit to be sung, the first and the last. The other three in the book before us, commencing respectively,

"Look how we grovel here below ;"

"In vain we tune our formal songs ;"

"Dear Lord, and shall we ever live,"

should never be put into the mouths of God's people by any Christian minister. If private Christians are compelled to complain of their condition, their sinful wanderings, their short-lived graces, and their dying rates, let them do it alone to God ; or let them discriminate, and get together all the sick and halt, as such, and then reform. "Dear Lord, and shall we ever live," seems to present the case to God as though He were the cause of this. And can it be that the Church has reason to complain of God that He is not faithful to his covenant promises? No, never. But an unfaithful people must lay aside their works of darkness. Do not ask a soul 'burning up with the love of Jesus, of whom we believe there are many, to join the throng whose unbelief compels them to say,

"Hosannahs languish on our tongues,
And our devotion dies,"

and, that we live *at this poor dying rate* ; for we do not believe it. We should dishonor the grace of Christ, we should plunge ourselves into unbelief with the rest. We are receiving the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we do love Him with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength. That is not a languishing and dying rate. It is salvation. We adore the grace of Christ who has made us rich

7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7.

through His poverty. We feel rich, and "dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God." We therefore cannot sing the stanzas which have obtained such use in the Church of Christ. Let the dear children of God discriminate in their songs, and cast away those stanzas which cultivate and nourish the principle of unbelief. For it is, it must be, unbelief which ignores the work of Christ in cleansing us from sin. As for instance,

"By Him my prayers acceptance gain,
Although with sin defiled."

Impossible. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." If I am defiled with sin, how can I approach God? It is very true that Jesus is our acceptance with God, but He is such *by cleansing blood*. Our petitions need His blood to be presented with them at the throne, because they are the petitions of such imperfect creatures; but sin, *the transgression of the law*, must not appear in them. There must be a mind at peace with God, and averse to sin. The prayer of the sinner, *i.e.*, prayer with sin defiled, cannot be heard. He must go to the fountain, and his sin shall be covered over. A prayer marked by imperfection may be accepted, if presented in Jesus' blood, but *if defiled with sin*, it can have no place before the throne.

One stops to ask us, if imperfection is not sin. We answer that there must be a very broad line be-

tween imperfection and sin. "Sin is the transgression of the law," and can be helped, can be shunned, can be triumphed over by the Blood and Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ. We can do all this through Christ strengthening us. But *our imperfections are not active sin*. While they need the blood of Christ because of their incompleteness, they yet have not necessarily any of the filthiness of sin about them. We should, therefore, make a broad distinction between them, as God has, in the definition of sin. We are and shall be incomplete in this world, our powers being weakened by the fall; but that the infirmities of our constitution are actual sin, we cannot believe. Jesus covers our incompleteness with His perfect work, and thus enables us to approach God with boldness.

Another hymn, which needs expurgation because it puts unworthy words into the mouth of the whole Church, and either compels *all God's children to use them, or some*, who cannot apply the sentiments themselves, *to be silent*, is that hymn of Cowper, so much sung,

"Oh, for a closer walk with God."

The stanzas commencing respectively,

"Where is the blessedness I knew,"

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed,"

should never be given out to a whole congregation. There are some who cannot conscientiously sing

them. Nor will it do to throw off the subject by saying that those who cannot sing them had better look within their hearts and examine their mistaken condition. *That is easily said.* They *have* looked within their hearts, and they have, adoring, seen the Lamb of God enthroned there. Their peace in Jesus is like a river. They have joy, and knowledge, and purposes in the service of Jesus, to which their "first" experience is only as the light of a taper compared with the clear shining of the sun. Why, therefore, should they sing these stanzas? Is not their experience Scriptural, the path of the just, as the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day? Is the condition of those who honestly can sing those verses a Scriptural condition? Is it honoring to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ? Is it right for any single Christian to sing that more than once? Much less for the whole Church to bring young Christians up to expect such things in their experience, and thus strengthen unbelief on the breasts of the Church?

It is true that we *help* the unconverted and the convicted sinner to sing hymns that lead them to Christ; must we therefore help believers sing hymns that lead them into legality and away from Christ?

We mention another hymn, the one commencing,

"Come, thou Fount of every blessing."

Two lines in that hymn, though they have, by rea-

not want any remnants of unbelief about us. We might as well send soldiers into battle with old artillery wagons, against a foe on well-trained chargers, or permit the soldiers on the march to battle to sing some stanzas on the fear of death, as to oppose Satan's hosts with these whinings of unbelief. It has already helped him to shut up our "dying rates" by scores and hundreds.

These are the words of deepest affection, and tenderness of spirit in the writer, for the Church of our Lord Jesus.

The hymn commencing

"Thus far my God has led me on,"

has many objectionable features, from the fact that it seems to take for granted that a true Christian experience necessarily must sing, and hence, that every Christian in any given congregation must be in a state to sing such lines as these, which we cull from all the verses :

"My hopes and fears alternate rise."

"Oft an absent God I mourn."

"'Tis thus our pride and self must fall."

The whole hymn is mournful, and a sort of complaint of present straits into which the soul has been cast by "the faithful love" of our God. *e.g.* :

"Temptations everywhere annoy,
And sins and snares my peace destroy ;"

and this is the thorny road in which God leads His

dear people to try their graces. In other words, God makes the graces of His people (for they are the fruits of His Holy Spirit), and then He proves them by intermissions, and this is inevitable in the case of every Christian ! Impossible. The sentiment does not agree with the Word of God. "Great peace have they which love Thy law ; and nothing shall offend them" — margin — "They shall have no stumbling-block." Does not God answer His people's cry, "Lead us not into temptation" ? Is there no place on earth ; is there no man on earth who has had a supreme confidence in Christ, and is "kept by His power through faith unto salvation" ? Does not God vouchsafe for any of His children to "deliver them from evil," or is His deliverance so short-lived that they are often deserted by Him ? Not so. There is a fearful incongruity in this hymn. Interruption of peace comes from disobedience and unbelief. God does not bring these about, but has made the way clear, so that every thought shall be "brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments ! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."

As to the trial of our graces, God does not try to make us temporarily fall, but to strengthen. When He tries He sustains. We come out better and brighter, not from a process of sinning, but from a

trial where *we were led to* trust Him. *In no case* does God deliver His child over to Satan. The believer leaves God, goes into folly, worldliness and sin, and what can he expect but desertion? He is never compelled to sin, nor would his own weakness be dominant if he would keep hold on God; nor has God ordained that any should be unable to get the full measure of His help in leaving their sins. Just the opposite. It may be objected that facts are that God's people do universally fall into a condition of unbelief. There are blessed exceptions; these must increase as Christians find how much they have in Christ. If the objection had been granted, it would not prove that Christ had not promised to keep His people in "perfect peace" — but simply that men following their own ways had not availed themselves of His grace. It cannot be denied that God has brought His people into a most gracious possibility of constant faith, and dwelling with Himself, and of His own constant indwelling in them by their simple faith in Jesus. That line, therefore, is not true which urges:

"'Tis thus our pride and self must fall."

God has another way of delivering His children from pride and self, *if they will be delivered in His way*. Their difficulty is, that they seek in their own way, and they keep their own will. Then, of course, they must suffer. But, for a moment, what is His way

of subduing all evil in us? Simply Christ. Christ will vanquish all the powers of hell in the soul, and He will do it at once, and by His own miraculous power. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *I am crucified to the world and the world is crucified unto me.*" There is the cure. Give up your will to Jesus Christ. "Go whithersoever He goeth," or bids you to go, and we say not we will warrant you; *He has warranted you* that you should be kept "in perfect peace." This world will be very little to you, and only as a present laboring place, not at all for amusements, or physical or material rest. In Christ you shall be "*crucified to the world.*" Now then, it is a truth that

"Thus far my God hath led me on,"

and that God has been very gracious to His people. But let them not turn again to the folly of unbelief, and selfish pride, and taking up the world again after they had cast it behind their backs. There is abundant grace in Christ to "keep us every day from falling, and to present us faultless before the throne of God with exceeding joy." Let us drop the hymns, by whomsoever composed, which teach the opposing sentiment, and which plunge the Church into weakness and sin.

II. Some have questioned as to God's time of destroying the works of the devil. *They will have*

it that it is not His design to destroy them during this life.

Such objections, however, must have nothing to do with the natural and necessary connection of the words in the context. Verse 8th of the 3d chapter of 1 John tells us: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." Verse 5th says: "He was manifested to take away our sins;" and verse 6th takes the consequence from this, that "who-soever abideth in Him sinneth not." Verse 8th commences with the declaration that "He that committeth sin is of the devil," and closes by the utterance already presented, that Jesus was manifested "to destroy the works of the devil." This, then, makes positive the proof that the words do necessarily refer to the present life-work of Christ in the souls of believers.

There is no question concerning the *future* downfall of Satan. The point which we now make is, that Satan falls to-day, every day, and his works are destroyed upon the exercise of simple faith by the weakest saint. This Jesus has already done. The prophetic word is now absolute fact: "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, Thou hast received gifts for men, . . . that the Lord might dwell among them." (Ps. lxxviii. 18.) Jesus Christ *now* leads His people's captivity captive. He binds Satan for them every

day, having first "entered his house and spoiled his goods."

The destruction of the works of the devil, and the manifestation of it, are continually going on wherever the faith of believers is taking hold of His "exceeding great and precious promises." It is seen,—

1. In those injunctions used by the Apostles, who knew Satan's malice and power: "*Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*" (James iv. 7.) ("Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour); *whom resist, steadfast in the faith.*" But how shall a puny worm presume to resist such a fierce, universal, and apparently omnipotent foe? Because Jesus has already so destroyed the works of the devil in the soul of the believer, that by a simple faith the devil is frightened away. That simple faith counteracts the devil's wiles, by bringing against him, in the very instant, the force of the eternal Lord which he dares not face.

Jesus Himself hath put the very expression into our lips which brings dismay to Satan, and manifests the destruction of his works. He tells us to pray, "deliver us from evil." The greatest or the least evil. The devil or any of his works deliver us therefrom. When put up in faith, it brings an immediate, sweet, full, infallible return. The devil's evil is immediately broken in the heart, or we are

not delivered from it. But we *are* delivered from it when the Holy Ghost takes His throne within, and garnishes the temple of the heart with all manner of holiness. If the Holy Ghost doth not banish the works of the devil, how can He Himself dwell within us? But He doth dwell within us. And by His omnipotent sway He hath banished the false accuser from the heart, and hath made it "all-glorious within."

The present destruction of the works of Satan is seen,

2. In our daily and continuous deliverance from bondage through fear of death, or any other fear. We, being partakers of flesh and blood, "He also Himself, likewise, took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 14, 15.) In consequence of this gracious deliverance many are now living in glorious liberty who were formerly slaves to fear, and they have been in the daily and uninterrupted enjoyment of the pleasing experience, many of them for years, which have been like heaven upon earth.

It may, indeed, be that the number appears small. It appears small because they are scattered among so many who live, according to their own confessions, far below their privileges. Concern-

ing this latter class it is to be remarked, that under the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, it must be criminal in the intelligent believer to live below his privilege. The grace is so free, the Lord Jesus is so ready, the word of promise so full, the Holy Ghost so omnipotent, the faith required so simple, it should not seem that any believer would walk in chains of bondage.

The works of the devil are continually being destroyed.

3. In the daily courage of many of the believers of Jesus. It need not be said that many who have been fearful of risking life for the Lord, or for themselves, have, upon putting their trust in Him, and setting out upon His service, become bold advocates of His doctrine and His ways. In times of persecution, they have endured with the utmost patience, resignation, fortitude, and even joyfulness, the most grievous tortures, *not accepting deliverance*. This is the destruction of the works of the devil in their hearts so far. And such have confessed His power to do wondrous works in their souls, bringing them near unto Him, conquering all backwardness of their nature to suffer for Him. It is the old story living yet in power — “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” It is present as well as historical illustration of the gracious fact, that in the destruction of the works of the devil in our hearts, “God hath not given us

the spirit of fear ; but of power and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. i. 7.)

Because Jesus hath already destroyed the works of the devil in many things,

4. The Church of Jesus has a precious song of *present redemption* to sing ; and many are now singing it with rapture upon the earth : " O death ! where is thy sting ? O grave ! where is thy victory ? " The believer is conscious, by the power of an indwelling Christ, that for us Jesus " hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." So that we need not shrink at " death's alarms." Nay, rather we sing that death is abolished : " It is not death to die ! "

" Jesus, thou Prince of Life !

Thy chosen cannot die ;

Like Thee they conquer in the strife,

To reign with Thee on high."

Sing the song, brother, sister ! Let not Satan rob you of your joy, and send you back to slavery in fear of death. Jesus has blessed the grave by taking its precious dust in His own care, and He will watch over the elements so that they shall not irrevocably scatter it. " He will raise you up at the last day." Let grief be far away. We that believe in Jesus are in no land of captivity. It is not the day of darkness and the dead, but of Jesus' power to save from all darkness, and to give the light of life. Praise Him ! Hell is vanquished. Satan is

defeated. Believers triumph, and they sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. They sing the song of kingship and of priesthood, and hell and Satan are powerless to vanquish them, or to disturb the heavenly melody of their singing.

Now, it is not needed that the Church wait till *all* the works of the devil are destroyed before she sings. Jesus may not see fit at once to destroy them all in the whole earth. That will be by and by. But *for* and *in* His saints, as we have seen, it *is* His glory to destroy them, in order that *we may "live in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life."* Let the generations of believers, as they come and go, by faith trust the slain Lamb to accomplish His own gracious and matchless results. "Faithful is He that calleth them, who also will do it."

III. There are questions arising in the minds of believers, the answers of which appear from their present view, at least, daring, and such as (they think) they never could utter. It may be that they do not now look at these questions from the right standpoint, and that they are mistaken in the answers which they would justly give if in the enjoyment of this precious experience. The questions upon which we now treat are those most frequently met with.

1. Are we not to grow in grace?

We answer, yes, by all means. How could any

Christian live without it? And yet, dear reader, many of the notions of God's dear people must be wrong upon this point. I can best illustrate by alluding to a conversation between several Christian brethren. One of the brethren had stated his views of holiness by The Blood and Spirit of Christ, and expressed his belief that it was the believer's privilege in Christ to live a life of holiness. Another brother answered that he loved the Lord Jesus, and tried to serve Him in a weak way, but that he had sinned very much yesterday and to-day, and he expected he should again to-morrow. This was not said of the constitutional infirmities which cling to us as the results of the fall, but it was spoken in view of known, conscious sins. And these brethren frequently utter their belief that Christians *necessarily* commit known sins.

We ask them where they draw the line? How much known sin can we be conscious of in transgression of the law, and yet enter heaven? The Word of God is very precise upon this point, and it will not do for us to leave ourselves to the uncertainties of a vague plan of our own. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." It is very true that in a moment a true believer can have his sins washed away, and "if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father;" but it is also true that we are very uncertain of our life, and that we may go at any moment. Now if we are to be taken

into eternity very suddenly, and if it be true that holiness is an essential requisite for heaven, then it will not do for us to say that we know we are sinning from day to day, and that we expect to keep on sinning. In that case heaven is a very great uncertainty, or rather it is certainly not ours.

The Word of God presents Jesus to us, not as taking sinners into heaven, but as redeeming them from iniquity, cleansing them, saving them from sin, and thus preparing them. Holiness is presented as a fact, a living reality, and the whole philosophy is stated whereby His people may perfect their holiness. Nor is the perfecting of holiness spoken of as mingled with sin in the soul. No, the sin, the "filthiness of the flesh," is first cast out, and then *holiness*, having taken its place, is *perfected*.

Holiness is not unholiness. Sinning from day to day is not of the nature of holiness. Holiness is cleansing — sin is corrupting. Sinning from day to day makes holiness from day to day impossible. Sin does not and cannot consist with holiness. We are told about David and Peter, but they do not and cannot tell us that David and Peter were holy when they committed their sins. Nor could they have entered heaven (they were not fit for it) when they were thus sinning. Nor was it the decree of God that they should sin. Concerning us it is written, that "He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, *that we should be holy and*

without blame before Him in love." All the declarations of the Word of God about holiness present it as a being cleansed, as a state of separation unto God ; with the motions of the divine life active in us, with a gracious and God-given and God-inworking ability to cease from sin and self as "partakers of the divine nature."

Yes, after cleansing is done, holiness is to be perfected, not by daily sinning and repenting and daily repenting a little more so as to catch up to our sins by the time we die ; but *holiness* is to be perfected. The perfecting of holiness is its establishment as the habit of the life, the completion of its degrees in our growth in the love and knowledge of Christ, and in the sight and sense and appreciation of new views of the divine glory and work of redemption. *Holiness in the saint is both perfect and to be perfected.* It is perfect in that it cannot be imperfect. It is perfect in that it covers the whole of our being. It does not appertain to the half or a greater portion of our manhood, but to every power of body, mind, and heart. *It is wholeness.* It does not exist in a half-hearted state. Holiness is perfect in its supreme disgust of sin, its complete separation from it, its complacency in God and His divine complacency in it as His delight, honorable and precious.

The divine philosophy of this perfection of holiness in the saint of God is, that it is the work of

Jesus Christ by His Holy Spirit. If it were man's work it would be very imperfect, and its name would speedily perish. Holiness is the work of the Holy Spirit on the believer's heart in answer to his faith. It is a continuous work on the heart of the man *abiding* in Christ. If he *abide* in Christ he sinneth not, but if he leave his abiding-place an hour or a day he sins — in the one case he is whole, cured of all his plague, filled with the riches of the king's palace ; in the other he is sick, sick in every part of him, and ready to perish. We must repeat our view of this matter as one of vital importance, because it has been strongly objected to.

Objectors have said, "Why, then, you hold that a man is either perfectly sinful or perfectly holy." We answer. One look to Christ brings Him into our hearts, awakening all our powers into active sympathy with Him. And "he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all." He that is holy does not sin. He that knowingly sins is certainly not holy. Any other view raises the question with a very dubious answer, "What, then, is meant by redemption in Christ, old things passed away and all things become new?"

As to the saving power of Christ, who can doubt it? Looking to Jesus brings Him into the soul, enthrones Him there, and invites an authority which, according to His promise, He is sure to accept and use. If touching the hem of His garment

availed to drive away the woman's infirmity in an instant, have we not reason to think that the eating and drinking of Him by faith make the heart whole, and renew the nature of a man? It seems strange to take any other view. The infinite compassion of Christ teaches us that He will not leave us without His own power to save us. His divine love pledges to us the powerful indwelling of His Holy Spirit, for the supply of every want of our renewed nature. How easy, therefore, is obedience to the Lord's command to be holy. It is but to look and be so. True, it requires a giving up of all refuges and all idols, but consider that there is no looking at all without this.

Any person who thinks He is looking to Jesus, and has not made an entire surrender according to his light, is deceived: *he is not looking to Jesus*. This point should be well understood, for it lays great responsibility on the ministry, and is the secret reason of all the worldliness and vanity that has made its way into the visible Church. One look at Christ must make me whole, or I cannot understand the types, the promises, the invitations, nor understand how it is possible for me to enter heaven. Now, then, it must be that the soul looking to Jesus is, by Him, in answer to the faith which receives Him as such, made holy — it is perfect in Christ.

Let it be further observed that this holiness is

to be perfected. Its degrees are to be made as the growth of a perfect child from infancy, perfect in all the parts of a living man, but to be developed in strength, in capacity, in associations and influence with and over others. The principles of holiness may be made stronger, the light of God may shine more fully, the Word of God may be better understood, the means of grace may be more and more skilfully handled, the living sympathies of the body of Christ (His people) may be more and more cultivated. And so the will of God in our whole nature shall give robustness to all our holy character, that it may be rounded out into full proportions and positive influence upon all with whom it comes in contact. So our full-born souls go on unto the perfection of resurrection glory, not ceasing to grow even when we have reached heaven itself.

2. If we are saved from sin, where comes in its confession. Is it possible, then, that we are to confess sin no longer?

It is our desire here to answer the question (for we think every difficulty in the mind of an *inquirer* will be met by it), —

What is Evangelical confession of Sin?

There are many whose religion is shown by a sweeping declaration and confession of their sins. They are sometimes even so free as to declare themselves "the chief of sinners," and say that, if a

man do not really feel himself to be the chief of sinners, he must be mistaken. They regard the confession of sin as a necessary part of every prayer—a suitable preparation for asking the mercy of God in Christ. But their confession of sin, so far as we have heard it, is one of the most unintelligible habits, to hear which one might suppose they were about falling into hell. For certainly people who do such things as they confess every day, can have no interest in Christ, and do not certainly have the promised Holy Spirit.

It is not long since that we heard a confession of this kind by a gospel minister. He was confessing sin for the congregation assembled. He told the Lord that we sinned with a “high hand and a stretched-out arm,” that we had “forgotten our God,” “gone away from Him,” that “we had lied unto Him,” our lives being at variance with our profession. Indeed, had any irreligious person noticed the language of that confession, he might justly have said that by their own words those people had been a set of hypocrites; and that the grace of God, and the cross of Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit (for whom the same prayer uttered thanks) had been quite ineffectual to produce that holiness which God requires in His saints. The confession of sin is insisted on with pertinacity as a necessary duty of every moment of our Christian life, the presence of sin is insisted on as the con-

tinual plague of every Christian heart, and they speak as if every Christian must continue to have a "plague in his heart," notwithstanding God's promise of cleansing by His Holy Spirit, the descriptions of the blood of Christ as our Fountain, and the statements of our renewed condition, as those that are walking "in the light, as God is in the light." We verily believe that, in some quarters, the confession of sin is the most unintelligent portion of private and public worship.

When Jesus Christ washes us, after we have yielded our all to Him that He may be the effectual Worker in us, we are made clean, "without spot and unrebukable in His sight." Our past sins are then all put away from us—away from the sight of God, away from the record against us; the precious blood stands for all the infirmities of fallen nature. The Holy Spirit is given to keep us clean by drawing us to Christ, taking the things of Christ and showing them to us, and applying to our hearts the truth of the Holy Word. This is the "sanctification of the Spirit" apprehended by faith, the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." In this way it is that we become "new creatures," the plague is taken out of our hearts, sin cured, "old things [sinning among them] have passed away, and all things have become new."

We surely are not now, in this gracious state of

oneness with the Lord Jesus, "rolling sin under our tongues," and "sinning every moment in thought, word, and deed." If we are wrong, then we ask where is the cure wrought by our God? In what does it consist? You answer, "In the tendency of our being." But if we are sinning, the tendency of our being is to sin. And if we are living unto God, the tendency of our being is unto God. So says the Word of God. "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

After this work of the Holy Spirit, there must of necessity be a very acute sense of the sinfulness of sin. "That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." Its appearance to the awakened child of God is hideous. It cannot be otherwise, because we are partakers of the Divine nature. If this be so, and we feel, from the very necessities of our regeneration,

"A tender sensibility to sin,
A pain to feel it near,"

even in its slightest forms, it would seem that the weight of sin which we noticed above as being confessed, must craze our sense. It does not produce this result in those who habitually confess it, since it is with them too often a simple dogmatic confession, lest they should fall from true humility.

But if it be true that we are thus sensible to the presence of sin, then the confession of it will not be a mere general statement of our sinfulness. It will be specific. When we commit sin we shall know it, feel it, and be deeply wounded by it, and we can lay it specifically before God. It will be no unintelligent confession of general sinfulness. In fact, we think that the confession of general sinfulness when God has proclaimed our pardon, our justification, our sanctification by faith in Jesus, and our new creation, is dishonoring to the Great Workman in our salvation, is a phraseology which belongs to our old condition, and is an act of unbelief in not taking God at His word in His statements about our purification.

It must therefore be very weakening to us, as it takes our eyes off from Christ, and stops the flow of that gracious life which comes from Him. In old theological dogmas (God forbid that we should cast them *all* aside) there has been too great a confounding of the state of sinner and saint. It is hard to see how a saint should be loaded down with sins. To apply generalities, applicable to unregenerate life, to saintly life, is very manifestly an incongruity which must shut out the truth of Jesus Christ, and produce misapprehensions of His work in the soul.

We hold evangelical confession of sin by Christians to be, —

1. Profound gratitude and thanksgiving to God for his miracle of grace in healing our incurable souls, and a constant testimony, in every way we can give it, that we were what we are not, that we are what we were not, *by the grace of God*. "By the grace of God I am what I am."

2. If actual sin has been committed, the tender heart of a saint (we are not speaking of doubtful cases, but of undoubted Christians) will always know it, and will specifically confess those sins, in no mere general terms, but as such. If not too much tied up to the pseudo-dogma of *necessarily indwelling sin*, producing unbelief in Christ's power to save to the uttermost, he may sweetly find that Jesus saves him from sin. Then he may confess that.

3. The supposed answer to this question is a stumbling-block to many :

AM I HOLY?

This question almost invariably gets a negative answer. There is a fear of professing holiness, and a dread of entering into companionship with errorists. Our position is at the cross of Jesus Christ. And the question is not one of egotistical ostentation, or of pharisaical pride, neither of any dogmatic spirit, being simply a consideration of what the Lord Jesus has done for us, of the present extent of His remedy for the sins of His people.

Put the question in another form. Am I a saint? It is the very same question. Now answer it. You fear you are not a saint? Then you fear that you do not bear a character which was universally applied and meant to be applied to the members of the primitive Church. You are willing to admit in general that you are a Christian, but you are very anxious to say that you are a very poor one, or a very unfaithful one, or a very imperfect one, and that you have a great deal of remaining depravity.

We think, beloved, that you are by these utterances giving great encouragement to a kind of religion which is ruining the spirituality of the Church. For it places the Church with the world, it emboldens indolent Christians to think they are on the ground the Lord has chosen for them, and it encourages false professors, and deceived persons in their show of religion, which they are incited to believe, by your confessions can be legitimately mingled with a little sin. And thus we get into the Church many worldly people, who *appear* to love pleasure more than God, and, in all probability they do.

But must this inevitably be so? Is it possible that Jesus Christ, in opening "the fountain for sin and for uncleanness," *designed* that *every* soul of His people, or *many* souls of His people, or *any* souls of His people, should be tainted with sin?

And that with the two most prominent utterances of His word before us?

1. That He is of "purer eyes than to behold evil," and that He cannot look upon sin, etc.

2. That He will dwell in His people, and walk in them. Can two walk together except they be agreed? Can two dwell together when they must be in infinite and eternal disagreement? Can God dwell in our souls with sin, when it is written that He cannot look upon it? Does God walk in His people while they are daily and hourly sinning against Him? There either must be some misunderstanding on the part of the Lord's people, or else God must live with sin, which He says He cannot look upon. Has God provided nothing to meet this emergency? Does He not design to purify His Church from all iniquity, and has He not decreed, from all eternity, that we "*should be holy and without blame before Him in love*"? He has, beloved. The fault is not in God's work. He has opened a Fountain for sin and uncleanness. He has sent His Holy Spirit to dwell in us, so that sin might not have any place in us, so that the righteousness of the "law might be *fulfilled in us who walk* not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

What, then, is the difficulty? This: that the people of God have the views and feelings of the world reproduced in their religious exercises through unbelief. Unbelief is a want of full reli-

ance on Christ to do all things for us, and a want of separation unto Christ, in every engagement of life. Faith binds us to Christ, unbelief separates us from Him. Faith receives all that Christ has done; *unbelief is afraid to appropriate all His work, as if it would be presumption.* Faith gives up entirely to Him, that He alone may work, *willing and doing* within us; unbelief wants to help work, and to examine the flaws which nature has left, and so stops Christ from working. It is as if the man with the withered arm, after it was healed, should have looked at it to examine and see if it was really healed. But he doubtless went forth in its use, to praise the Gracious Restorer. And so shall we do when we understand the true way of faith.

What has He done? Has He not made a full provision for His people to be saved from their sins according to the meaning of His name JESUS? Yes, beloved, His work is perfect, "that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life," that we might, with a true faith, "reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." But it is not the part of faith to reckon ourselves what we are not. No: faith takes hold of the sacrifice of Christ, appropriates His precious blood and His purchased

Spirit, and believes we are holy *by His inworking*, by *His indwelling*. It commits the keeping and the cleansing of the soul to Him, as to a faithful Lord, who will do what He hath called us for, *i.e.*, “sanctify us wholly in body, and soul, and spirit, and preserve us blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This is the faith of every returning prodigal. If our newly converted heard more praise for the full cure of sin, their faith might soon grasp the uttermost salvation; but they soon learn to believe that they cannot be cured fully, and thus unbelief is fostered.

And so it is the present experience of the Church after she has been cured of sin as the man was cured of his palsied arm. She looks to see if she is really cured, and like David numbering the people in unbelief, falls into mourning and helplessness, and worse than all, into a condition of unbelief. According to her faith she is cured, according to her unbelief the old sin palsy returns.

The conclusion of the whole matter is, that *when Jesus has done a work for us, we are not to fear proclaiming our new character to His praise*. We are to go home to our friends, or wherever His sovereign pleasure has placed us, and tell them what great things God has done for us. We were blind, now we see — tell all that we do see the great things of His law. We were unholy, but by His grace we are holy, saved from sin, and filled

with all the comforts of the Holy Ghost. Surely it is no pharisaism to proclaim what God has done for us, and no vaunting of self when we proclaim to the praise of Jesus, that He has "made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." For it is never said by any enjoying this sacred light, "I am holier than thou," or, "I am holy of myself," or, "I can be holy if I choose." By no means. The praise always is given to Jesus with the same breath. This is the word of our expression, "Jesus saves me;" "My Lord has been with me to-day, and has been for me the double cure." "Praise the Lord that such a poor sinner is made by heavenly grace a saint, a holy person, through His blood and Spirit." Is that pharisaism? Nay, it is the utterance of those who enjoy the *earnests* of the heavenly inheritance. It is the language of that heaven below in which, as in a fiery chariot, they expect to go to heaven. It is the "Glory begun below."

4. "Yes," say many who are convinced of the truth, but do not know the living reality in their own souls, "it must be a precious experience, *but it is impossible for me to live so*. I might in the millennium, but now I cannot. Beloved reader, do we not have some earnest of summer, days when everything has the appearance of the coming months? Do not the months in their peculiar manifestations of weather lap over into one another?

Does not the millennium grow out of this dispensation of the Holy Spirit? Have we not now all promises and all appliances sufficient to bring about that wonderful blessedness? Is not all that is wanting the simple faith of believers? Do not answer me, beloved, that the fulness of time has not yet come for God to bring all His children into a millennial experience. For God's time is known only to Himself, and more than that, He works upon individuals singly and alone; and further yet, *it may be in His design that you shall be the very next person to enter into this rest of faith, and thus antedate that glorious day.* So far from being a hard way, or impossible, we shall find our Redeemer's words to be true to the letter: "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." Do not be startled, beloved, by our view. *We* do not have to live so. Christ has made Himself responsible for our life. ONLY BELIEVE.

CHRIST IS OUR LIFE.

Christ is our life. There is the whole matter. Faith is the bond. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead." We question no more, then, upon His riches of life. But since He is our life, why question upon the fulness of the life we are to lead? It is very true

that it is measured by our capacities in one sense, but why should it be measured by infirmities when it is designed to overcome them ; or by former sinful habits which it is calculated to cure, and to replace by good and holy living ? Or why should it be gauged at all by the wretchedness which marks an absence of simple faith, from which Jesus most distinctly promises to deliver us ? “My peace I leave with you.”

But we are met by many, very many, who are saying, “Yes, that is so, *if we could always live so.*” The answer to their objection is that CHRIST IS OUR LIFE. It is not we that live, but “CHRIST LIVETH IN ME.” *No greater mistake can be made in regard to holy living than that we do the living* — in other words, that we live ourselves. “NOT I, but Christ liveth in me.” Faith does nothing in the matter, but simply takes Him at His word. Christ says, “I will dwell in them and walk in them.” Faith flings away the little all of self, and says, “So Thou shalt.”

“Victorious faith the promise sees,
And looks to that alone ;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries ‘It shall be done.’”

The poor life of unbelief, which has become fearfully prevalent, looks on the wretchedness-side, on the law-side. There is, indeed, an acknowledgment of the Christ-side of the picture, but mistaken humility often cries out for the “bitter-herbs.” It

is the glory of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He has taken the bitter-herbs out of the feast. When the Jews killed the lamb they must mingle the taste of it with bitter-herbs ; but now, when the poor sinner has been eating the bitterness, he has only to eat Jesus Christ — His body and blood. God puts nothing in to spoil the taste, or to modify the effect of this heavenly meat and drink. *The* gospel-passover is a pleasant feast. True, it is a feast of unleavened bread. But what was to the Jews a figure of trial, is to us, in the substance, very great blessedness.

The leaven of the world we very much dislike, we fly with pleasure and supreme satisfaction to our table of the “unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” Yes, beloved, Jesus has made our *present perpetual passover* a feast of abounding joy. He has wiped away our tears of poverty, and given us *crowns* of kings. It is unbelief which makes our Christian life any other than a joyful one. For Christ is our life.

1. He is our life as regards all external things. He extracts for us sweets from poisons, health from chilly winds, honors from enemies, stores from famine, and victory from overpowering hosts. We find *everything* to work for good. And there is no exception — not the very least. The *apparent* exceptions shall only prove the rule. On one day a number of accidents may come together touching

self, property, children, which men may call very great evils ; but "victorious faith" waits another day in sweet repose, when the good old promise shall stand out in monumental beauty — "All things [shall] have worked together for good."

We have often wondered with great admiration at the life and activity with which certain marked men have appeared to inspire all under them, and all the concerns of vast commercial arrangements. Men say, "What they touch turns into gold." What, then, shall we say of our Jesus? It is by Him that these very individuals live, myriads of them, and He sees them all at a glance. Jesus lives everywhere for us, and at His touch everything turns into gold, and better than gold for us. When people go from one country to another their money needs exchange, but when they take their last journey, no broker can turn their gold into the heavenly good. Our Jesus so works together in all things, that they receive us into everlasting habitations, and the most unlikely things turn to profit in the great exchange. What seemed old rags to the world, what unfitted us for the circles of worldly society, enhance the glory of the heavenly rest.

Therefore, since Jesus has bidden us rest on Him, we may be thoroughly convinced that nothing can move outside of us to harm us. We will work with our hands, we will be very diligent in business ; beyond that we will "be careful for nothing." It

is not ours to make our own life in the external world any more than in the internal. Jesus is our life everywhere, and by Him our being extracts its supplies from earth and sea and air and the angelic host.

Blessed Jesus, charm our souls into a subserviency of all our commerce to Thy will. "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows ; for so He giveth His beloved sleep." (Psalm cxxvii. 2.) O Christian ! do you understand this ? Do you thus trust Jesus for all outside concerns, as well as give all you have and all you do to Him ? Then you are a happy soul, relieved from cares which press very many into grief, day by day.

"Thrice happy man, thy Maker's care
Shall keep thee from the fowler's snare."

Jesus is more than all this !

2. He is our inner life. Faith is the bond. It is the province of faith to take Him as such, and rest upon Him implicitly. We may take Him to be our inner life, because He has said it. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

There need be none saying, "It would be pleasant so to appropriate Christ, *if we could always live so.*" We need no more do this living in the soul than we do the living in the world. He is the life within. As such we must take Him for all — the

all and in all of our contented souls, happy if we can know that He is fully enthroned. "Christ in you the hope of glory" is the tender aspiration of multitudes who long for a joy to which they are strangers, though they know there is a joy promised which is unspeakable. We do not believe that any man ever, even by the grace of God, becomes infallible, but the writer is free to confess his full belief in *salvation* "*to the uttermost*" by the infallible Christ. And why not? Let Him have the supreme place, let Him have your soul to do His will in it; what is His will? "Even your sanctification." It shall be done.

I repeat, if He have your soul to do as He please in it, neither Satan nor yourself can stop His work. That is, you having yielded up all to Him, will not wish to take anything out of His hands ("he that believeth shall not make haste"), and Satan cannot enter. Satan flies if Jesus be there. And if he flies he cannot do much inside nor out. "I will dwell in them and walk in them."

Christ Jesus is our life as its *supply*. As He provides the breath for the body, so He inspires the soul. When it is told us that we do not pray without the Holy Ghost, why should it not be believed that we do believe and live by Him? We could not love Him unless He had first loved us to come in to us and sup with us. But He provides His own feast — "we with Him." Precious Jesus, thus

to assure us of the pleasure He takes with us in the feast of His own love ! Precious Jesus, thus to supply the heart, to sit in it, to love what is garnished by His grace. “By the grace of God I am what I am.”

He is our life as its controller and director. “He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of him shall flow rivers of living water.” “This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive.” His love is all-absorbing, and so is His presence. It is irresistible. Try it. Give Him the control of your heart and all your powers, and see how He shall fill every avenue with Himself. It is a favorite way of replying to this, that He has the control already. But, beloved, it cannot be doubted that if your soul fully rested on Him to control all your movements, He would, “according to your faith,” govern and rectify and bless it with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

He does indeed control as King at all times, and in infinite mercy keeps our feeble frames ; but in His priestly royalty He waits our faith’s request and subjection. It shall be to you in this as you will. He will not deny your will in this matter. If your will opens to Him, His heavenly rays shall make such a brightness in your heart as to convince you of a heaven below. You shall find Him day and night filling your mind with the choicest thoughts,

leading you away from habits of doubtful propriety and into those of true spiritual security, and shedding abroad within you such comforts as to continually fill your mouth with a new song. All the way along it shall be "Jesus." "To me to live is Christ." You will be convinced of a life within which shall often call out a heavenly surprise. Though you will be very far from *doing the living*, yet you will say, "I do live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." The Christ within shall surprise you in all the fruits of the Spirit, and you shall be a wonder to yourself.

Now it might appear strange to say, beloved, "*Let* your life control and direct you." And yet it is strangely sad that sin has so affected our poor, fallen humanity, and unbelief has so seized upon the Church of Christ, that very few permit the living principle within to work out its legitimate results. Men are dying from disease by neglect of their vital functions, and Christians, through neglect of their living Christ, and a departure from simple trust and complete submission, are mourning over their wretchedness and leanness.

But Christians may be a different race. "To them the privilege is given." They have a happy choice before them—a choice of Jesus Christ. Their life! to rule and absorb all their earthly life, and constrain them to the full enjoyment of Himself as a present and "uttermost" Saviour! In-

deed, this is required that they may be proper witnesses to His "exceeding great and precious promises."

Believer in Jesus, it belongs to you to see that He has supreme control in your heart. He is not responsible for your failures. You need not ask Him if you may, or to let you, consecrate all to Him. Do it. Let Him, as your life, work in you His unspeakable joy.

IV. But the *greatest hindrances to an entrance upon this rest of faith are in the hearts of Christians*. If it were not for these, perhaps their objections would fade as the early dew.

I. There is a disposition to materialize, to make everything out upon an earthly scale. Some would sit and "sing themselves away to everlasting bliss," in a vague and undefinable fervor, entirely satisfied with their earthly condition.

A young Christian professor, surrounded with everything to please the mortal sense, once said, "I do not see what need there is of Christians going to heaven. Is not this world, as a work of God, as perfect as it can be? Why do we want any better?" The difficulty was in the want of spiritual vision. Such would seem blind to the higher style of beauty which belongs to the spiritual world. They are easily satisfied with earth, and have much hardship in thinking of God, and of heaven, and of eternal life. Their "heaven below" is at a vast

remove from God's heaven above. And yet we do often hear such speak of enjoyment during religious services, or during some closet devotions. But they complain that such happy experiences are very brief, and are succeeded by painful seasons. Their summers are short, their winters are long.

BELOVED, THERE IS A REAL HEAVEN BELOW.

The saints in heaven are not only happy, they are intelligently so. They are singing a song, every line of which, every word of which, is full of the choicest thoughts that are possible to an intelligent being. Our foretaste is something of the same kind. It is by no means a continued repetition of the name and work of Jesus in verse, and a solemn frame while at the happy employment; but it is a sensible apprehension of Christ as made unto us a most perfect, everlasting, present Redeemer.

Nor is it a mere temporary experience, for when a person gets near heaven in reality, he does not wish to leave it soon. Surely, God will not drive him out; neither will Satan hope to draw him out, unless he sees encouragement in some looseness of the mind. Emotions are short-lived, but the enjoyments of the everlasting covenant are given from eternity, and are designed to reach into eternity. "A heaven below" is heaven begun below, and is a present knowledge of the same facts in our redemption, that shall swell the heavenly chorus.

Heaven's song is full of Christ and what He has done. And so is the heart of one who enjoys the foretaste.

It would appear, then, that all we have to do that we may enjoy heaven here, is to go at once to the blessed Jesus ; and if we know what He has done for us, appropriate it by faith, and praise Him for it ; or, if we do not know, ask Him, through His Word, how fully we may be saved in this life, and empty our hearts before Him for the reception of His fulness. For Jesus surely will possess us wholly, if we will only believe and not doubt ; while, at the same time, we are standing on salvation ground by a full consecration of our all to Him.

Then, beloved, you shall know what it is to have heaven on earth. The frame may not be excited, but there will be inward knowledge of completeness — perhaps never felt before. He will do His work sweetly. He will save you to the uttermost. You may even wonder what kind of a blessing He has given you. You will know a precious riddance from burdens, a delightful sense of oneness with Jesus Himself ; a full disposition to let Jesus have the control of you in all things ; a most tender sensibility to sin ; pain at the thought of sinning, and a rising above it, with the sweet assurance of always being able to triumph in Christ. If any bad habit clung to you before, so that it was a grief

to you, you shall now find yourself delightfully free from it, with a realization of liberty and sweetness in the service of God, such as perhaps you had never known, or at least only in short glimpses. The precious will of the heavenly Husband only needs to be known to make any habit which is unpleasant to Him exceedingly distasteful to us. You shall commence the new song which belongs this side the flood "unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and *hath made* us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

You may find yourself walking the floors of your house, or your room, with raptures; if you are rich, you will feel divorced from your riches to pour them out for Jesus and His cause and His chosen; if you are poor, you will be enjoying greater riches than the treasures in Egypt or in Wall Street. You shall have songs in the night, and will feel the rising of a hearty "Amen" to the praise of Jesus wherever you hear it spoken.

This, beloved, is heaven commenced. How can it be a mere temporary emotion when all things have forever passed out of your hands, and Jesus is received as the living Christ, the triumphant keeper, Controller, Life, indwelling Redeemer of your soul.

The truth is, beloved, that this is the salvation

from all sin, which is the privilege of every believer. And yours. This is the joy unspeakable and full of glory, the unutterable blessedness of those who *will* have Jesus to possess them wholly, and would be content with no amount of good outside of Him.

“Thy gifts, alas ! will not suffice,
Unless Thyself be given ;
Thy presence makes my Paradise,
For where Thou art is heaven.”

THE GREAT NEED OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH IS (*and they need not study many volumes to know the secret of true blessedness*) LONELY FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST.

To be with Jesus is satisfying. And we can be with Him now. Some took knowledge of the early saints “that they had been with Jesus.” Nor can any help marking the persons who commune with the Lord. For they come from His presence with faces that show love, and satisfaction, and endurance, and determination to hold up the word of life. If, then, we are asked, “Where is the place of power ; what is the secret of a life of triumph over Satan, and sin, and *Antinomianism* ? ” we answer, in “*lonely fellowship with Christ.*”

This is the secret of all saintly power within the soul, in the world, in the pulpit, in the press, in business, in the social circle. Lonely fellowship with Christ shall bring the soul His own gracious

victories over all its foes, and end its inward struggle with the powers of darkness. It shall prepare us to teach the truth in clear lines, so that the world shall not mistake. The ungodly will hate and frown, and if possible, persecute ; but their changing tribes shall feel the weight of that influence which eventually shall lay the nations at the feet of Jesus. This truth applies both to individuals and to bands of Christ's followers, whether large or small. Let the circles of His people take their business to His throne, and stay there with it, until they receive the thing they ask of Him, or become panoplied by His Holy Spirit for the zealous efforts which shall bring the desire of their hearts. Jesus often uses us to do His work and accomplish His desires. In fact, He never does what we can do. He will not do the common things which belong to us.

What a blessing if every person of the company, besides thus taking their work to Christ in a body, lifts up his heart to Him in private ! For this lonely fellowship with Jesus may be had, though we are surrounded by many of our fellows. Our hearts and our desires may be with Him though we are in the crowded assembly, or in the busy thoroughfare. There is a hiding with Christ, when the outward appearance is that of activity and business, and concern about others. Paul was hiding with him in the shipwreck, when he was giving orders and di-

rections to the crew — changed from prisoner to captain, though he appeared to be bound. And many a sermon which appears to engage all the preacher's thoughts, is preached, while the heart is leaning up toward Christ, and breathing after His blessing.

Fellowship with the Lord Jesus is a condition of oneness with the mind of Christ, and consequently it is marked with the light of the Lord. We have confidence that He heareth us, and if we ask anything of Him, we know that we have that which we ask of Him. "We walk in the light, as He is in the light, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Such do not walk in darkness, but have the light of life; they have no wretchedness, for Jesus has delivered them; and no condemnation, because they "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Such persons really pray. They may not use as many words as some; they may be very far from fluency in their expressions; but God hears them, and answers in whatsoever they ask. Prayer is not so much in the words as in the condition of the soul. Eloquence of expression and mention of wants fail when the will is not subject to God, or when there is no faith. Our will laid at Jesus' feet, and our hearts simply taking Him at His word, the poorest expressions of our slow speech become mighty in prevalence with God. But such a sub-

jection of our whole being to God only is agreeable to fellowship.

Beloved soul, do not think that it is just going into a room and attentively reading a chapter, and as attentively mentioning your wants. Far from it. First of all, you must be willing to receive answer from Jesus in His own way, to have Him take His own course with you, and to send you "whithersoever" He will. You must be willing that He should bring you to this state of soul in the day of His power. Then you may have precious fellowship with Christ. Your will laid down, His will shall be sweeter than honey to your taste ; your plans all given up, His wisdom shall be yours. Yes, he will guide you with His eye, and you shall be confident of this ; though you be walking in usual paths, or taken out of them in ways you know not, or though you seem to be carried of the Spirit to a distance from all you have ever known.

Beloved, is it not delightful, above all things on earth, to see a heart alone with Jesus, asking Him *what He can do for it?* And what shall we suppose the answer to be ? The power of Jesus, the meaning of Jesus' last sentence on the cross, "It is finished," including, as it must, the purchase of the Holy Ghost, the willingness of the heavenly Lamb to fill his hungering and thirsting soul with righteousness — all these, and everything we know about Jesus, proclaim that such a soul shall be very rich

in all the things of His storehouse. Pardon, peace, holiness, love, and the word of God shall dwell in him "richly in all wisdom." He shall be "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."

Let us be among that number. Do not let our mortality, our humanity, our natural condition as sinners, hinder us from asking what He can do for us. The answer will bring immortality, will shine with the light of Christ Himself in our humanity, and will prove His almighty power to make us His own representatives in this world; flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bone; the several parts of His body, shining with the brightness, the spiritual life, the moral beauty of our living Head.

If we may have such fellowship with Him by whom we can do all things, why should not our very life be a doxology? It will be, beloved, and He shall approve His own workmanship. Praise Him, praise the Holy Trinity, whose wondrous grace confounds the powers of darkness, and promises to make earth happier than Eden.

2. The chief of all difficulties in the hearts of true Christians is Unbelief. The Lord, with gracious continuance, has been inviting, "Come and take," "Drink abundantly;" but what myriads are saying of this rest of faith, "It is not for me." Though they have desired it long, though they have consecrated everything, though often, both by The

Living Word, and by dear souls already at rest, they have been encouraged to throw themselves upon the ocean of infinite love, they still continue to cry out "it is not for me." We have an answer to their unbelief—and may the gracious Lord use it as a specific for some longing soul.

IT MAY BE YOURS.

THE "GOD OF PEACE" will do great things for His chosen. This name proclaims it, therefore the apostle loved the use of it in such a connection. The "*God of peace be with you all.*" (Rom. xv. 33.) "*The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.*" (Rom. xvi. 20.) "The very *God of peace sanctify you wholly.*" (1 Thess. v. 23.) The name expresses a gracious work of God, wherein He has changed our condition, and drawn our willing souls to His throne. It therefore includes everything that can embolden us to seek the "best gifts," to expect the largest blessings.

Some of the "exceeding great and precious promises" are really startling to those who have been accustomed to go to the throne with a pilgrim's pack. Their load has been as galling as the Jewish ceremonial. It was more than they could bear. They cut the promises down by interpretations. We are encouraged to enlarge upon the promises rather than cut them down, by this holy name—"The God of peace!" It signifies that

God is our Father, that we are reconciled to God, that we are admitted to sonship, that HE will fulfil every legitimate desire of our being.

None will doubt that it is a legitimate desire — to be, in our measure, fully conformed to His life, to be perfect, to fulfil the end of our creation. This His Holy Name is our heavenly warrant, therefore, for our expectation of the fulfilment of His every promise. The “God of peace” expects us to take the peace, the full peace which Himself hath given at the cost of His greatest gift. Since He is our “God of peace,” we have every reason to expect a result, in His gracious dealings with us, commensurate with the statement of this promise, with the sacred meaning of the word peace, and with the most extensive needs of our renewed nature. Beloved, in prayer we should be bold. Ask Him not for the inside limit of His grace, but its utmost.

“Thou art coming to a King,
Large petitions with thee bring.”

“The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. AMEN.” (Heb. xiii. 20, 21.)

There, dear child of God, is your heavenly war-

rant. This promise covers all your need. Here is the whole story. It expresses just the thing you want — to be, in *your measure*, “perfect in every good work to do His will.” It tells you how only it can be done, Himself “working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight.” Blessed be His name, we are not ignorant of that inworking power ; the only difficulty with you, beloved, being that you have hitherto limited the promises, and hence you have limited the praise of “Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the Power that worketh in us.” And this gracious fact of His inworking is based upon the chosen foundation of our salvation, “the Blood of the everlasting covenant.”

Do you not see, precious soul, how this promise belongs to you ? It is yours as much as if there were not another soul on earth to claim the blessing. Shall not this, then, stop the mouth of unbelief which has hitherto said : “The precious experience is for those who have more grace,” “I am too vile,” “I am not rightly surrounded for the enjoyment of it.” It is your blessedness, that in fulfilling to you the promises of His “everlasting covenant,” God does not have to kill off a few of your friends, or to break down your business (if it be a proper one), or to make an angel of you. He will give you the precious experience of which I write, and save you from your sins, in the highest or low-

est position you may occupy. In the furnace, in the lion's den, in the caves of the earth, being "destitute, afflicted, tormented," in a family of children, yes, even "though your house be not so with God" as David had to say; anywhere, everywhere, the Lord can, and will give you "a heaven below." But of course He cannot do it without your faith. You must simply rely upon the wonderful statements of His "exceeding great and precious promises," and believe that He can, that He will, that He does for you, everything that He has thus engaged to do. Before you can so believe, you must have everything of your former possessions marked, by an entire consecration, — "*The Lord's alone.*" For how can you believe when you desire anything out of God's order?

Now, my brother, or sister, old or young, sick or well, crippled or straight, successful in business or broken down, married or single, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, widowed and desolate or having an husband, favored or despised — behold the grace! You may be filled with the Spirit. I do exhort you, singly and together, to take Jesus as your FULL and PRESENT Saviour. "Be not filled with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." Cast out the wine, the world, the flesh; let the Almighty Spirit in. "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and

will sup with him, and he with Me." This promise was sent to the members of a lukewarm church.

You that have hitherto unworthily given the Saviour but a part, have had a secret idolatry, have even denied Him—come now and be blessed, come now and sup with Him; now have your "fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." God has declared His purpose and His promise that *you* should be holy, having all grace, living above the world and near to Himself. Beloved, it is, as His word says, "great peace!" See His description of it: "*Be careful for nothing* ; but in everything by prayer and supplication *with thanksgiving* let your requests be made known unto God. And the *peace of God, which passeth* all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. iv. 6, 7.) Such a peace may be yours. Every provision is made for it, every promise is given to encourage the expectation of it; He stands at your door with it. "He is able to save them *to the uttermost* that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. vii. 25.) "I am the Door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and *find pasture*." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John x. 9, 10.)

"What more *can* He say than to you He hath said,
Who unto the Saviour for refuge have fled?"

3. There is another trouble which keeps many out of comfort and out of "this grace wherein we stand." It is a Seventh-of-Romans difficulty, and a Galatian snare, which in our journey we do well to keep in the distance by simple faith. Paul would never have cried, "O wretched man that I am!" but for this, and many who have been burning lights in the Church as Payson was, would have shone with greater power, as indeed the lovely Payson himself in his confession gives us room to see. This trouble goes under the name of

LEGALITY.

Legality in the Christian system is opposed to spiritual liberty. The one is a condition of the most enlarged and enlightened pleasure, the other is that of bondage and burdens. Spiritual liberty finds its all in Christ, and revolves around Him with conscious supports of His influential presence. Legality very strongly professes the same, but is continually looking to its own works as though they were the complement of what God has done. Hence while spiritual liberty is in the enjoyment of a happiness which is sometimes indescribable, legality is frequently under burdens resulting from its continuously unfinished business.

Legality, therefore, sometimes greatly complains that spiritual liberty enjoys so much and does so little, and it quite loudly proclaims that spiritual

liberty shall not enter heaven because it is going there on flowery beds of ease. It insists that the way is hard, narrow, thorough, and full of suffering to the flesh, though the spirit is full of rejoicing. Its own singing, however, does not sound like heaven; it is rather a mournful exhortation to others, that if they do not put on sackcloth they will most miserably perish. It becomes a sort of spiritual police over the children of God, to watch their frequent failures, to remind them of the strictness of God's holy law, to assure them that but few of them will see the Lord unless they do differently, to goad them into a certain way of living in which everything shall be cut according to its own pattern, and yield to its own sectarian spirit. And hence those who yield to it come, not into a broad, spiritual enjoyment, nor into the love of the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians, but simply into legality. As *it* is, so do they become in the world, not gospel Christians, but legal ones.

Peter fell into legality when he was to be blamed. Then, instead of the bold and daring apostle, he became a dissembler. For legality makes cowards of the brave. Peter's cowardice carried away many besides, and even Barnabas was chained down to Judaistic ways. Paul himself knew well what it was, for he had been there, and experienced the same folly. When these holy men simply held the hand of Christ and walked in Him, He the meanwhile

working in them and around them, they were far from all alarm from the very gates of hell ; much more from Judaistic ways : but when they went again to the commandment and tried to fulfil it by great faithfulness and outward observances, they cried out from their burdens. Sin, which had been dead, revived, and they died.

The testimony of legality is that of burdens. The work, left to Jesus, is truly delightful, but taken upon ourselves is a burden which we nor our fathers were able to bear. But this testimony has various shades. Now it will be recounting its good deeds ; how it lives a much better life than many Christians, how much it suffers for Jesus' sake, how particular it is about the jots and tittles of the law, how it hates such and such appearances on the saints, how it is free to submit its doings to any inspection, and therefore how complacent God must be with it, and how wide open the door must be for it into glory. "And oh !" it says, "if I can only live so till the last moment, heaven will be mine."

But soon its testimony is changed, and it groans in conscious suffering of its own shortcomings. It has been fearful of flesh and blood, it has not had the courage for the performance of some difficult duty, it has not been entirely dead to the opinions of the mass of those who call themselves (many of them truly are) Christians, it has been led into eating something it should never have touched — some im-

ported grapes, or some expensive food, or it has been sitting at some person's table without at once breaking out into singing though the friends were not accustomed to it, nor has it loaded itself with burdens in doing duties, which it has done in such a way as to make the duty pleasant. The duties, indeed, are done, but they have been done too easily. It would feel far better if they had been done with more hardships to the flesh. And under the power of such burdens as these it is legality which cries out "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

It has been trying all the time to do right, but has done wrong. Its difficulty has been that it tried too much. It has left off to let Christ lead it. It has run unsent. It has cut its dress by its own pattern, and has not had respect to the colors, and tastes, and multitudes which Christ Himself has created, and which He Himself will crown with His own approval, if they who have possessed them shall have walked with Him in white. It has been unmindful of the easy yoke and light burden of Christ, in making things hard to do which Jesus meant should be precious privileges.

There is another phase of legality. In a meeting held for the promotion of holiness some months since we noticed a young man, without apparent feeling during most of the meeting. The emotions of some of the people began to rise into demonstra-

tions of warmth, when suddenly this young man fell from his seat upon the floor. Where this is the work of the Holy Spirit we have no objections to offer, but would encourage everything *that is of the Holy Spirit*. After the meeting we asked the young man what were his experiences. But how were we astonished, as he appeared perfectly calm, and as with carelessness rather than with emotion he said, "Oh I just did it to mortify the flesh." That was the first case we had heard of such a way of mortifying the flesh. We have heard of some since. But it occurs to us that if such truly desire to mortify the flesh, it would be far better to fall down in the street, or in some other place, than one in which every person present may be supposed to have a kindly sympathy. But that is one of the worst forms of legality. It is doing something for Jesus' sake which Jesus does not want any to do. They say that Satan tells them they are afraid to fall down on the floor, and so they fall down to baffle Satan. But if that be Satan (may it not be, is it not simply a morbidity of conscience?) we certainly should have another way of meeting the question. We should answer — yes, we *are* afraid and ashamed to do anything which, if the whole company should do at the same time, would simply demonstrate an unmeaning service, and an amalgamation of useless and foolish improprieties. "Let all things be done decently and in order."

We do thoroughly believe in being counted a fool for Christ's sake when men will so call us for our intelligent action. But we do also believe that our utmost intelligence is to be used in guarding us from what really has no meaning in it. The truth of the gospel is foolishness, and prayer is foolishness to the world, and strict holy living is the same to those who live in sin, and the full proclamation of these will bring a mortification of the flesh ; but an unintelligent falling, to baffle the most intelligent power of Satan, will and can only bring a legal satisfaction, which a little intelligent searching would do away with.

We believe in great thoroughness of religious living, in the most scrupulous integrity and honesty, and distance from the world ; but also in the most intelligent submission to Christ as the source of all wisdom and of all wise action.

The cure of legality is in the simplest faith in Jesus. He has paid our debt. He at present saves. Our duties do not save us. The way in which Jesus saves is by working within us all righteousness. It is a sovereign's work. He makes us pure by dwelling within us. When faith apprehends this fact, and simply leans on Jesus to do the work, legality is cured. But when the soul, leaving this simplicity, tries, and tries, and tries again to work for God's favor, the disease and its consequent wretchedness come on, and it cries,

“Wretched man that I am.” Let Jesus rule !
Away with all endeavors after our own working,
with all burdening ourselves with other men’s sins,
and with judgments upon the saints. Perfection in
Christ is *Christ in us*, the hope of glory.

“Till to Jesus’ work you cling
By a simple faith,
Doing is a deadly thing,
Doing ends in death.

“Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus’ feet,
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete.”

CONSIDER, BELOVED, THE HEAVENLY HUSBAND.

Who and what are ours, and what for ? Here Christian, is the unfolding of bliss. Make sure answer to this question, and no man may ever call you poor. Neither will you say you are poor, neither will you doubt nor be dismayed. *Christ is ours*. Let each one walk in the joy of this truth (for it is not true collectively if it be not true individually) : “*Christ is mine*.” How rich we are ! Friendship with kings does not always bring riches. The king may love you as a poor subject, or as a faithful underling, and you may remain always such. Not so with Jesus. “Henceforth I call you not servants—but I have called you friends.” *Jesus has no underlings*. They do not cry out in the streets after Him as by magic of personal presence

and royal pomp, "Long live the king;" but His meek presence *charms* the humble, and the little children in heart, and they lay their all at His feet, and raise their hallelujahs, though there may be many who despise. The despisers wonder and perish. Jesus raises these little ones into friends.

There is, however, more than this to be included under the expression, "*Christ is mine.*" It is not the "mine" of friendship : it is the "mine" of marriage. There is no truth more clearly revealed than that Jesus is our heavenly Husband, and we are His bride. It cannot be so in the aggregate but by the mystical union of single believers. "Thou shalt call me *Ishi* (my husband), and shalt call me no more "Baali" (My Lord). And here is our blessedness in reading the precious prophecies of good to Zion. They belong to believers. The aggregation of believers shall all together enjoy them when they have as individuals embraced them. But this matter of our heavenly Husband has its *individual application* in the New Testament. "Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ ; that ye should be married to another, even to *Him Who* is raised from the dead."

The wife is no slave. The true wife of a good husband, as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, is inexpressibly dear unto him. He has taken her to be one with him, and she is encouraged in the full exercise of the marriage spirit. It is hers to

cherish the love by which she has come into possession of her husband's name, his goods, his life, his associations. Into possession *under him*.

Let the name Husband be applied to the Lord Jesus. We are at once introduced to scenes of blessedness of which the old prophets told. "As it is written, eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But *God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit.*" This union is not a fleshly union as though we knew Christ after the flesh, and received honors for such a royal relation. It is sweeter, deeper, more extensive than any union of the flesh can be. With our Jesus we go far from the flesh, far from the way of the world, into the regions of spiritual relationship, of exalted intimacy with Him Who is unseen by mortal eyes. But not unreal; nothing more real, we may rather say nothing so real, for our Jesus is the Maker and Former of all realities. We feel nothing so quickly as His smile, nothing so fully as the turning away of His dear face.

The soul that is married to Jesus is well married. There can be no question upon the good or ill favor of his future life. For in this case the Husband never grows cold, He never leaves His home to seek among others an opposite craving. His desire is to be with His chosen, and have His chosen near to Himself. And therefore He has the most nat-

ural desire to possess the unrivalled place in the heart of His beloved. He knows full well that her happiness is in her deepest simplicity of love and submission to His every wish. For all His wishes are good and only good. His will is the supreme law of her enjoyment.

Believers in Jesus, His will is your highest law of good. Keep close to your heavenly Husband, and you will always be rich and happy, and in the sweetest fellowships of earth and heaven. What mistakes they make who profess attachment to the Lord, yet mingle carelessly with a godless and time-serving world; whose closets are but seldom sought, and when found are not places of real heart-prayer, but only duty-places, and God's Word a duty-book. But that is a very hard position. When the law of life for a bride is a law of duties to be done, her spirit is slavish, and her experience wretched. Worldly professors are just of that class. They are like wives, who expect to enjoy all the love of their husbands when they do nothing to show that they have the spirit of true liberty. But what a wife, whose heart does not overflow with love! How hard her lot! What a Christian, whose life is taken up with doing things which "a task and burden prove."

Now God's Word says "all things are yours;" but such Christians cannot understand any more than the theory. They see it in the Word of God, but they do not see that *they* are the persons com-

prehended in the word "yours." "It is for those who have more grace than they." Suppose a wife should say the same. The husband says to her, "All things are yours, and I am yours." But bowed down by a slavish spirit, she says, "Not for me." She disbelieves his word. Her happiness will go for nothing. No wonder that a Christian who is not entirely devoted to Christ should be out with himself, out with the world, and not at one with the Lord Jesus. We are even told that there are many such — and now and then, in some places, such as the Fulton-street prayer-meeting, quite frequently you hear those who have long professed the Lord Jesus doubting their conversion, or feeling most wretched from habits of sin and evil which they might naturally expect the grace of God to cure. They are living in the seventh of Romans.

"'Tis a point they long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought, —
Do they love the Lord or no,
Are they His or are they not?"

Strange language for the bride to use of her husband! If the heavenly Husband should speak so of His bride, it would seal her perdition. It is exceeding great unhappiness, when, while He remains true, she cries for the faultiness of her love.

Alas! that there should be a single soul of such when Jesus lives to bless! We do not refer now to such as the poet Cowper, who was diseased, nor

to any poor souls so afflicted. *They* should not be a rule unto the Church, surely. But outside of the number of such afflicted ones, why should there be an uncomfortable soul, under the promises of the Lord? Only through unbelief—through keeping away from Christ.

Now the true wife has a way of enjoying her husband's name, his position, his possessions, his home, and his influence. And her way of so enjoying herself forms a proper directory for every Christian in the enjoyment of our relation with the Lord Jesus. She casts all her living into her husband's life. She sinks everything she has into his name; his titles cover her all. About her name she has no trouble; she cares not for her own any more, but only for his; it is now a disappointment for her to be called by her former name, a joy to be called by his. She desires it published everywhere that she is called by his name. And so of the rest—what has she but his name covers it all. As to her actions, it is now her chief study how she may please her husband, in his absence, in his presence; her life, her time is devoted. This is her mode of enjoyment.

Should it be otherwise with the Christian? Nay, the same. Our name is lost in that of our adorable Lord; our joy that it is so, our anxiety that it may be published everywhere, that we are forever to be called by His name. And what else for Him?

When the name has gone can we keep anything back? Nay, to our Jesus everything goes with our full souls. Everything! Ah, beloved, He married a very unprofitable bride. Is it not an unspeakable joy to us that our Jesus took us from the lowest pit, and made us all that we are by His own agonies? We render Him His own.

Now ye dearly beloved members of your heavenly Husband's bride, let there be no legality, no duty-service. And since He hath prepared such a purification as Esther never knew, let us who have this hope on Him purify ourselves as He is pure. *In Him.* That is our only purification, and it is complete. He that is washed in this fountain, and possessed by this Jesus, this heavenly Husband, though he had been possessed with devils before, is clean every whit. He has not need any more to be looking at his filthiness, being assured if he look unto his Lord the filthiness will be no more.

Is not the question answered, Who and what are ours, and what for? Jesus is ours sweetly, fully, everlastingly, and "with Him all things," for our present purity, for the fulness of our joy, for His own glory, and for eternity.

ONLY BELIEVE.

Dear ones in the Lord Jesus, if the stones are not all out of the way, we at least have the princi-

ple by which ALL may be removed. It is — how shall we speak it without a shout of triumph? —

ONLY JESUS.

HALLELUJAH TO THE LAMB.

CHAPTER IV.

CONCLUSIONS.

WE now have some things for our dear Christian reader, which may the precious Holy Ghost use for an application, and for a comfort, and for his growth in grace ! We deal in plain words, but they come from the cross, and may the sweetness of their living source be in them ! We would write with great earnestness on a theme so vital ; let the dear reader hide himself in Jesus while we write.

First, We put a question to you who have perhaps stumbled at our doctrine, and now, even though you wish the experience, yet stand as critics of our words.

DO YOU LIVE AS YOU CAN ?

There are those belonging to the Christian profession who make bold to say that they are not living up to their privileges. If so, they are certainly throwing away the most valuable possessions which have ever been in their reach. But these are the peculiar possessions which were purchased for them by the precious blood of Christ. They are, therefore, so dear to the eternal Father that they cannot

be thrown away with impunity. Trampling on the blood of the covenant need be nothing more than treating it lightly. Here are some souls, then, who lightly say that they are not living as it is their privilege to live. They seem to feel very little concern upon the subject.

It concerns God, for it was His fore-ordination that His people "should be holy and without blame before Him in love," "in all simplicity and godly sincerity." He gave His Son to die for them to this end in their lives. It concerns Jesus, for He is now living to intercede for them, and to see of the travail of His soul in them, that He may be satisfied after His dreadful sufferings. He is looking for the fruit of His purchased, promised, sent, and descending Spirit in them. It concerns the angels, for they are most interested spectators in the things of our lower world, as regards the salvation of Jesus, and it must move them to the depths of their being to see souls thus neglecting Christ, and treating His blood as water spilled upon the ground. Yet these say it lightly ! They complain of a certain class whom they call "*perfectionists* ;" they smile at their doctrines, which, however, they seek not to understand ; and they care not that in that word they have fixed a stigma upon souls who are in closest sympathy with the word, and work, and ways of the Lord Jesus. And yet they say freely that they do not live up to their privileges.

Of course, they do not mean that it is impossible for them to live up to their privileges. For privilege is their passport. It is theirs freely to do or to enjoy.

When a certain course ordained of God, prepared by Him, proclaimed with all provisions for themselves in it, is made their privilege, all disability is removed. They can take that course and live that life, and they certainly are responsible for it. It will not do certainly for such to be dying-thief Christians — that is, to leave their peace with God to be made at the last moment ! Let such take no encouragement from the case of the dying thief. It does not belong to them ; it was not spoken for such as they.

The dying thief repented at his first sermon-hearing, these have lived through whole years of preaching ; he took hold of Jesus by faith, and witnessed for Him before His enemies, and commenced a holy life there at once, but these are living content with what they freely allow is a mean apology for a holy life, far below what it is their privilege to enjoy. And yet they fully know that God cannot look upon sin, that He cannot have worldly idlers about Him, and that He must destroy everything about them which defileth or maketh a lie, before they can enter heaven. Ah ! they are willing, for a little worldly comfort here, to be saved so as by fire there ! But the willingness of sinful security

and ease takes even this hope from them ; for the things to be burned are not the wilful, willing, sinful acts of a godless mind. They are rather mistakes as to the connection of their doctrines with the cross of Christ, and so *if any shall be willing to be saved by fire* it may be that too late they will repent in a fire that shall not be quenched. Awful thought ! But whence is its rise ? In the hearts and minds of those careless professors of religion whom Satan has duped into living below their privileges ! He says they shall not surely die, and they more than half believe it. Why, they believe in the perseverance of the saints ! Yes, and Satan is glad to have them believe in that doctrine. They say that “there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”

But, beloved friends, the Scripture does not say any such thing, if you mean by it that when a person is once a Christian he always will be one, *do what he will*. Far from it. The Scriptures of God in that precious verse most expressly say that those to whom there is no condemnation are the ones “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Not every one who has the name of Christian perseveres, but those who live up to their privileges in following, with implicit obedience, the Holy Ghost.

Freedom from condemnation is a walking in the light, a coming up to the engagements of our holy

union with Christ our Lord, and walking with Him in all the simplicity of a faith which acknowledges Him to be the Divine Workman in the formation of our thoughts, habits, sympathies, and of our life itself. These are they who persevere, in whom, by their own free will and choice, the Holy Ghost works a continual holy living, and a constant faith.

Sometimes these careless souls, who complain that they do not live up to their privileges, in order to help themselves to an argument against those who advocate "holiness," ask them, "Well, do *you* live up to your privileges?" It may be a somewhat awkward question to answer. Yet all we have is of sovereign grace, and we answer it by that: "By the grace of God I am what I am." We might answer that our reply is of no consequence, since they admit that it is their privilege, that they are at liberty to live up to theirs. For sins which we might commit certainly will not save them from the severe penalty of those who know and can do their duty, but do it not. That is the old method of argument in our unregeneracy.

"Encompassed by a throng,
On numbers they depend;
They think *so many* can't be wrong,
And miss a happy end."

The retort of the question upon us, whether we live up to *our* privileges, is simply the *argumentum*

ad hominem, which proves nothing in the case for or against the question of our ability to live holy lives. Of this kind of argument Abercrombie says : " If a person be arguing in support of a particular rule of conduct, we may retort upon him that his own conduct in certain instances was in direct opposition to it. This may be very true in regard to the individual, but can have no influence in the discussion of the question." If *we* do not live up to our privileges, the fault is not with God, and does not lie in the fact that we are unable, but in us, or in any who neglect to use the grace which God has so freely given them. For it is certainly and must ever remain true that we can live up to our privileges. *God has established the privilege that we may enjoy it, and reap the fruits of it and that we may be without excuse in the day of judgment.*

This is, therefore, a very serious matter. It will not do to trust to your election, for that is only of those who are active in all righteousness. Whichever view of election you may take, it gives no excuse and is no covering up of sin. Nor will it do to trust to the imputation of Christ's righteousness, to make up what you have willingly neglected, of the imparted Holy Ghost's divine and saving influences. We believe, from the careful perusal of the Holy Scripture, that many who have been accustomed to calculate upon having the righteousness of Christ imputed to them at last, will be miserably

and fatally disappointed. For we see many trusting to it who lower God's standard of holiness by proclaiming it impossible. But surely our God has put forth no such standard.

It is very truly impossible for us to present an absolute righteousness to God, but we certainly can be recipients of the grace of God, which has every benefit of the death of Christ included in its fulness, and we can and must be responsible for the neglect of its wonderful provisions for our saintly character, Nor will it do to renounce the name of saint by a strange appearance of humility.

It is understood that a certain clergyman, in a sacramental address, some time since, said, "We do not come to this table as saints." One of his members lifted up his soul to the Lord, and said in his heart immediately to this effect: "Yes, Lord, Thou knowest that *I come to this table as a saint washed in the blood of Jesus*, and accepted in Him, the Beloved, belonging to *a company whom Thou hast called saints*, and to whom as such Thou hast proclaimed Thy exceeding great love in Him."

By the wiles of the devil only could such a condition have been brought about in the Church. Beloved, we *must* live up to our privileges. There is no word in the Bible which assures those who live below their standard of purchased benefits. If Jesus has purchased our rights, and we do not live in them, we must be responsible; and it may easily

be that many who confess themselves as such may be sorry in eternity for their sad mistake.

There can be no excuse for pride, ambition, covetousness, carelessness, vanity, fashion-following, world-loving, barren Christians before the judgment-seat. God will be justified when He judges us. Men shall then own that they had plenty of opportunity, plenty of Divine assistance held out to them and secured by the precious blood of Jesus, and that all their want of growth and want of blamelessness was their own want of appropriating by faith the promised work of the Holy Ghost.

Up, and *be doing*, beloved. It is the command of God that we appropriate the work of Christ, and He calls it the *work of God that we believe* in Jesus. Whether we can live as we ought, ask Jesus, and He will tell us that He will make us by His own power, through faith, "perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight." It is His work, and He will surely do it ; our work and our privilege alike is to believe Him, to have our hearts wholly sanctified, and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

If the work of our sanctification be His work, it must be an easy way for us. The pains were His, the precious results are ours. Our privilege, our engagement. For when we gave ourselves to

Christ, *it was to take all He would give.* It must be the nature of faith *to give all and take all.*

Do not, beloved, stand any more thinking of the hardness of the way. For it must be called — as it is the *only* way — so it is

THE EASY WAY OF HOLINESS.

Every one in all ages who has tried the way of Jesus has found it an easy way. It is easy in every step. All the hardness is before we truly get into the way. Convicted persons think they have much to do, they do much, and they anticipate much hardship in following the Lord, after they shall have commenced. But when they submit to God's way they always find themselves happily mistaken. They admire the easiness of casting themselves upon and living in the Lord Jesus. The only reason why there should be any lapse from the peculiarly "peaceful hours they once enjoyed" is found in the loss of simplicity in their trust. Of course, losing this, they fall into inconsistencies, and sins, and very frequently are more wretched than Paul is described to have been in the seventh chapter of Romans, for they cannot answer the question, "Who shall deliver me?" as soon as Paul did; and so they stay in the "wretched man" experience, failing to enjoy the glorious liberty of the eighth chapter.

They are often, therefore, pained by the fearful

discrepancies between the words of Christ and their own experience. He said, "Take my yoke upon you and learn for me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls ; for *my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*" They frequently find the yoke of Christ hard, and their burdens in His service heavy. This makes them cry out for very pain, because they know that Christ spoke the truth. Besides, multitudes are heard professing with joy that they have found, just as Jesus said, the yoke easy and the burden light. Now their only difficulty is in the want of simple faith. They do not with an unreserved consecration leave *all things, all present things, all past things, all future things* in the hands of *their Lord*, who is also *their Life*. They think they are in the yoke with Christ, but if they examine they will find that instead of being fully under Christ's yoke they are only under the end of it, or they are leaning to the outside of it. The yoke is well fitted to the neck — but the end of it or the outer side of it will only gall and fret the wearer. If he dreads carrying an even share of the load, and thus pulls off from his Helper, he only adds to the load, and spoils his own spirit. But if he remembers that the twin in this yoke is Christ Himself, and presses closely up to Him in the place where *His* yoke was meant to fit his brethren, he shall find the yoke of Christ not only easy, but sweet, and he shall find

the load which his unbelief so much dreaded is no load at all. For in this yoke-bearing Jesus takes the weight of the load, and gives the simple believer, who voluntarily takes place nearest Himself, the unutterable pleasures of *His* companionship.

Legality, the state of burdens, presses on the outer side of the yoke. Its doctrine is that the way of Christ is a crucifying way, which therefore fosters a spirit of complaint against those who find His way so easy. And so the legalist goes on with his burdens of sorrow and of service, looking at them as his "*evidences*." Therefore his "wretched man" experience becomes one of his chief proofs that he is a child of God. He gets the fact of his Christianity by inference, not directly from the bright shining of Christ in his soul. No wonder he should count the way hard. It is hard for him and for all who get their evidences in the same way. This legalist often sleeps at night on the *question*, "Who shall deliver me?" — not on the *answer*. Now the *question* is a hard pillow, begetting headaches and heart-aches, and spiritual rheumatism in "the joints and marrow." But the *answer* of that question is joyful in the extreme. He that sleeps upon that lies down to pleasant dreams, and to a joyous consciousness, in his wakeful moments, of a present Deliverer. His communion at midnight is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. The "wretched" asker of the *question* tosses and

groans, while the simple believer in the answer is entertained with "songs in the night." To the one the way is hard, very hard—"crucifying," as he says, "to the flesh." To the other the crucifixion is past—he is "risen with Christ" "in newness of life"—the way is pleasant, how pleasant! "Joy unspeakable and full of glory," heaven begun, a millennial experience.

This is the "Higher Christian Life." To get up into it is not the work of years and of excruciating sorrows. All the sorrow needful for it Jesus endured. All the discipline for it is occasioned by the Christian's slowness in believing. It is not right to say that years are needful, years of toil and painful experience, before one can enjoy it. This may be common, but it is not necessary.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, with deepest reverence be it observed, is a better Banker. The checks made out for the bank of faith are better paper than many would make them. The will of the Christian delays to present the check, the "*exceeding great and precious promise*," but the will of Jesus delays not. The rule of His bank is, "Ask, and it shall be given." "My peace I give unto you." It is in the present tense to all in believing communion with him, and in the future tense to give confidence for all future needs, and for all the succeeding generations of saints, to the end of the world—"Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy

may be full." Why, then, should we wait? To get better? That is Jesus' work. To get rid of our burden? The Lord is our Burden-bearer. To become ready for the enjoyment of a higher plane of spiritual experience? Alas! that is only on the principle of this world. How much better to yield everything to Christ *at once*, and at once to enter into the rest of simple faith, than to wait for years and be crucified by a slow torture into a readiness for this exalted experience, or rather into a readiness to consecrate all to Him, and to believe in His acceptance!

Believe with many of every name, who live in the constant sense of the presence of Christ, that your joy may be full in a day, or an hour, yea, even in a moment, *and that better than by waiting for years.* The years of waiting only contract habits of unbelief. And these afterward may interrupt the flow of simple faith. *Now* enter into rest. Now give everything you can name that men call "yours," in special consecration to the Lord; believe that He accepts your offering, *and enter to rest.* Now! "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Now is the time for a particular and unreserved consecration—for committing all your future to your covenant God—for taking Him at His word in every promise. Now is the time for your joy in Jesus to be full, your peace in Him to be like a river, passing

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all understanding. Now is the time for you, IN AN ALL-CONQUERING JESUS, to be free from all bondage, and from all your foes — devil, sin, and self.

It is now more than five years since the writer was brought into this gracious "highway." They have been years of exceeding great comfort, and that in many varieties of outward condition. The Heavenly Master has led him through many dark places, and down to the gates of death, with plenty and with nothing. The winters have been as summers, and "December as pleasant as May." Old burdens that haunted him through former years, and old sins which bore him down to the earth, and old idolatrous habits, fled before the power of The Living Christ, who commenced there to "reign without a rival" in his soul. Be it written, be it spoken; ye saints, help me to spread it, to the praise, and *only* to the praise, of sovereign grace. The former life was a hard one with a "wretched man" experience; these last years have abundantly proved Christ's way to be easy. The way into the highway of holiness is easy, and all along it is the same, for "all the way along it is Jesus." Come, dear saints, give up everything, lay down your all at Jesus' feet, and continuously live in your Hiding-Place.

Second. Dearly beloved, *abide in Christ.*

The New Testament places before us a mode of expression which is connected with our highest spiritual enjoyment. The same expression also looks

to the complete development of our soul's life. It is the utterance of our Living Head. "Abide." "Dwell." "If ye abide in me." "Dwelleth in me and I in Him." These words, in their connection with Jesus Christ and our own ransomed souls, are the sweetest of all the languages. For they describe the highest joy which is the strength of our souls, they are the continual illustration of the meaning of the words of Jesus on the cross, "It is finished," and they give a substantial view of our Lord's estimation of the riches of His inheritance in the saints.

Jesus with us, and we with Him ! How poor all knowledge, how tasteless all intellectual pleasures, how infinitely small all possessions in the absence of that gracious fact ! For when a man *abide in Christ*, he has more than heart can wish. Dwelling in riches is not satisfying. It is often broken up, and when connected with inability or want of inclination to use the wealth aright, it is really uncomfortable. But dwelling in Christ is always satisfying. It cures the spirit and keeps it in health when the body is low, and rejoices with foretastes of heaven when trials press most severely. And why all this ? Because dwelling in Christ is present, and full, and unlimited salvation. In such a condition all that looks untoward is really felt to be good, and there is so much positive and heavenly enjoyment, that the adversities of the situation are more than covered over.

Why should it not be so? Dwelling in Christ is everything. It is the hiding of ourselves where Satan, and evil, and sin cannot reach us, and where indwelling sin is taken away. "Whosoever abideth in Him, sinneth not." This is not to be understood in a forensic sense, but practically. Because dwelling with Christ is His own sanctification. Christ cannot dwell with sin, and so the soul who dwells with Him is kept from sin. Who keeps it pure? Jesus who only can; Jesus whose name assures us that He saves His people from their sins; Jesus who says, "I am the Way." How else can He be called "the Way," but by His own divine energy, which controls our movements, makes certain our condition, and works in us mightily?

It is on this account that we read so much in the New Testament of His working in us. In walking an earthly way, *we* do the work, but in spiritual life we simply trust Jesus to do it. And so coming to Him, He is not only the Way, but He is the "All in all," "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." We find Heaven by His communication of Himself to us. Now, then, if any wish to be "free from sin," to be "made clean," "to be holy," to have the power of the devil and the works of the devil destroyed in their hearts, they can have it no other way than by *abiding* in Christ. It must be constant victory when the unconquerable Conqueror is verily present. It must be eternal security, which the gates of hell

cannot even disturb, when we are shut up in God, when God is all around us, and under us, and above us, as a citadel ; and that by special promise, and by the most satisfying statements of His salvation. Who enjoy this victory ? The souls that abide in Christ.

“ O that I knew where I might find it,” says one. “ It is not my lot,” says another ; and another still, “ I shall never be made perfect but through suffering.” Stop, ye saints : the great salvation is at your door. Christ. Only Jesus ! Away with your fears. Make to Him such a consecration as you never made before. Give up everything to Him. Keep nothing for yourself. This is the very first step, because Jesus cannot do the mighty work for you while you are keeping back anything. It is simply impossible. Oh, let me sound it loud — consecrate ! *Nothing can be done in this cleansing way while you have a will of your own.* Get everything on His altar. Not a thing behind. Not a friend, or relative, or a dollar. All for Jesus ! Reputation, too. Be willing to be a fool. Be willing to differ with many, for you will be compelled to. People want so much of this world, that some of the best of them tame down Jesus’ expressions. Self and reputation must go, that Jesus may make Himself shine in you, and may give you His own reputation. Then Jesus will fill you full with Himself. He will “ open the windows of heaven, and

pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

But some say, "How can I dwell in Christ? Is it at my disposal whether I do, or not? I am willing to give up all, but how can I dwell in Him so that these gracious results will take place in me?" Well, dear one, Jesus is always first in the work. He has excited those desires in you, and now it is He first that is to dwell in you. Do you not believe that He will be as good as His word? "I will dwell in them, and walk in them." Believe Him. Fasten your faith upon Him and believe. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood," he that continually rests at my bleeding side, and alone trusts me for the nourishment of his spiritual life, "dwelleth in me, and I in him."

Third. Learn a lesson of the utmost importance, without which you can never get, nor can you ever keep the blessing which you seek.

"BE STILL."

Let us learn what it means *to be still*. "Be still, and know that I am God." You must not think that it would stop your daily round of duties in the family, or the community, or the church. It would not lessen a jot the utmost activity of needful, proper, God-ordained manual labor. It would not shut you up in seclusion, but might even enhance the necessity of constant motion in your body, to

and from places of business, and the hiding-places of sorrow and sickness and filth and misery. Indeed, very often the soul that is still before God is full of work, full of thoughts and plans about the work which every saint may find. We may easily conceive of such a soul as among the very busiest of men. It may even be said that he that will be still before God shall find plenty to do. Because when we stand still, it is to hear the voice of the Lord, and conscience, listening to the still, small voice, sees the work of the Lord on every hand.

Now the lines of this world's activity and of the stirring engagements of Christ's little ones are very different. In the former it is all self—in the latter it is not self. We do not here speak of every one who is called Christian. We speak only of Christ's little ones, with babe-like faith, and who are in the habit of resting on the bosom of Christ as John at the Supper. They have learned to be still in spirit, though they are exceedingly active—active, as some think, in that which results in little,—they are willing to wait for the decisions of eternity. And here is the characteristic of real quietness before God. The world and the worldly Christian (a strange yet very charitable name) work in present results; they may look for future fruit indeed, but they abound in present issues and perhaps in present appearances. The other has laid all at Jesus' feet, and labors not so much for the quantity as the

quality ; his chief joy, when in secret he goes to the Master with work which many think to be but little, but which he knows to be, and Jesus loves as the work of eternity.

Then, what we mean by “being still before God” is, to be living in the conclusions of eternity — it is to be acting as if the present hour of our work would be the last. Ah ! that is it. Men call on every side, and as the result proud souls are flying on every side to see that they lose nothing — with perhaps an occasional thought of scattering a little of their plenty for benevolence ; but these that quietly bend their souls to hear the still, small voice of their God, do not always follow the crowd that cry “here” and “there.” Their simple desire is to know what God would have them do, or where to go, or what to suffer. They neither strive nor cry nor lift up their voice to be heard or seen.

“Were all such,” says an objector, “the work would move on very slowly.” But, beloved, were all such, work would be done without reference to its external report — without regard to the classes of society in which, or the companions in labor by whom. The results would be as the labor, apostolically simple, but they would break forth into such glorious issues as would soon fill the world with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

Dear child of God, your highest usefulness and your greatest comfort lies in being still before your

covenant-keeping God. Do you desire to extend your influence *for Jesus' sake* (no other motive is of God) far beyond the narrow circle in which you live? First of all, get your soul on fire with a love that draws you momentarily to the blessed Lord. This you cannot do when you are going all about the world for comfort, and for advice, and for work. Stay a moment — *yes, stop long*, if it may be required. At the last formal installation of the writer over a pastoral charge, the minister who charged the pastor reminded him of the word "*consecration*," and urged him to act upon the thought. It was in that pastorate, too, that my soul found such a meaning in the word *consecration* as it had not before known. It had before been a word of general meaning, with quite general results. But that is by no means the true view of consecration. It is in reality the act of the soul in exclusive communion with the Lord, with a complete yielding of the whole being in special inventory to Him, for service, for suffering, or for the grave. It presents no stipulations, but rests solely in His sovereign use and direction of all our powers and all the property we may have thought belonged to our name. Any other view of consecration is deficient and ruinous. A glance is sufficient for the conclusion that such a complete consecration is only made in secret with God, and in a stillness of spirit which has left the fretfulness of its unrest behind.

I hear the groans of the hungry and thirsty multitude. They are crying, "This rest is not for me. It is for those who can live nearer to God than I can." Nay, it is for you, dear soul — *be still*. Your crying hinders your rest. Your aching soul needs rest. "Where shall you get it?" *In Jesus*. "When?" *Just now*. Be still. You are very anxious? Well, anxiety is not always of faith. It very often hinders it. It says to a man, "Let me lean on you," or to men, "Bear me up;" *but your burdens must not be taken so far*. Oh, what a mistake unbelieving children of God are under! They take their causes of trouble to men, as though they were nearer neighbors than the throne. But when your restless spirit goes to men, it turns from God — it travels miles with a burden when it might lay it down at once. Where is God? Where is Jesus? Where is the Holy Ghost? Ah! if *you could see where God is, you would not be so long seeking*. You need not bring Him down nor seek Him below nor send after Him. "Oh," you say, "let me get out of this crowd, and I can see Him." No, beloved, "be still." God is just here. Are you on bustling Broadway or selfish and noisy Wall Street, with a burden? God is here — lay down your burden. Your Lord Jesus is here to receive your burden, and carry it for you all the way home — no, not only as far as *Fiftieth Street, but ALL

* It was in Fiftieth Street, New York city, where the writer was filled with burdens that well-nigh overcame him. But blessed be the name of

THE WAY HOME ! Yes, this rest is for you, dear soul. Jesus wants you to have it. Surely that is warrant enough for your faith. If you are afraid, trust Him. If all is dark, trust Him. Don't seek to make sparks of your own kindling. Trust Jesus. Remember how *He* sent one of His ministers for a fish. He knew all fish, and He can successfully send you for that fish which will fully supply your present lack.

A man told me the other day that he had waited long and was about worn out with waiting. What a mistake ! *True waiters on God do not get worn out.* This man was complaining, and that surely is not being still before God. Waiting on God is full refreshment ; for while God's answer is preparing (it may be far off) He sends in to us delicacies, such as abound only in a king's palace. Hence it is written, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles ; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint."

Dear child of God, "be still." If the winds howl and the tempest raves, be still. Jesus cannot sleep. He is the Author of the day. Give all to Jesus, and take all things. For in Him "all things

the Lord, in that place of burdens in Fiftieth Street, Jesus brought him into this rest of faith ; and though the outward circumstances (the burdens) became heavier, yet his rest was like that of heaven. Jesus carried all the burdens, and has continued to do so ever since. Let the reader say with me, HALLELUJAH TO THE LAMB.

are yours." Only be still. For "*this is the work of God, that ye believe.*"

Fourth. Always let your faith be assured. The greatest, mightiest faith (I speak after the manner of men) is simple faith. *Simple faith, then, is full assurance of faith,*

The Lord Jesus Christ, God-man, Sovereign Saviour, the Light of the world, and the Light of life, laid down his life "that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly." The terms expressive of the union between himself and His saints show their privileges as beyond their own power of description — *friends, brethren, branches, sons of God*, and thus in the same family as the only begotten Son, with all the privileges of a saved family, in Him the ark of safety, and bound to the same heaven. The only condition to which we are subject is simple faith. Now faith cannot be exercised when we retain any selfish boons. The sinner must repent or he can never have faith. And the true Christian has reserved nothing for himself. If any suppose he is a Christian to whom Jesus is not First and Last, he is simply deceived. But when a man has let go everything for Christ, has forsaken every false refuge, and has made positive consecration of all (we know of no other kind of valid consecration), he may be, he ought to be, fully assured of his salvation.

For our salvation is not of ourselves. And ac-

according to the power by which we have it, we ought to be assured of it. If it were in any sense our own, then we might be privileged to doubt, since we are so miserably ignorant, and weak, and hell-deserving in our own natural constitution. But as we are to cast our own doings down, every one of them, and as this salvation is all by faith in Him Who doeth all things well, and Who never faileth, nor ever faileth His people, we ought to believe fully that we are saved, if we believe at all. It is simply wicked to doubt God, and to let His word pass for naught.

There have been many discussions upon the full assurance of faith, and according to many old notions it would seem that it was almost gracious to doubt. It would be gracious to doubt if in any sense we were saved by works. But since Jesus saves, who can doubt? For doubting is doubting Him. "No," you say, "I don't doubt Him; it is myself I doubt, whether I have faith, or love, or true zeal." But, beloved soul, who works these in the heart? Is it yourself? You freely answer, "Oh, no, it is God who worketh in me to will and to do of His own good pleasure."

Now, then, away with this pride which keeps you from coming to Jesus *just as you are*. Let Jesus work in you. Let him cleanse you for His own indwelling; you can never do it. Faith is a falling of the whole being upon God.

Since the promises of God are so abundant in this very direction, *our faith is to rest on what God has said*. It must, then, be an assurance. Not to be assured of what God has said, is to have unbelief. The Scriptures therefore are full in the mention and description of an assured faith, and they are only condemnatory of a doubting life. Doubts are devils in the Christian life. Let us have no more of them. This can be done only as our faith says, "only Jesus!" "He must, He will, and He does send His Spirit to do the whole work in me, and to accomplish my salvation."

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to *enter into the holiest* by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having a High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, *in full assurance of faith*; . . . let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; *for He is faithful that promised*."

Anything that has been promised is a subject of assurance therefore. Saints may and must be assured of that in their gracious standing before the Lord. The Lord has assured all believers in the possession of *peace*, perfect peace. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

They may be assured of their *hope*, "which hope

we have as an anchor of the soul." They may be confident of the possession of *proper dispositions* of mind, "hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." They may be undoubting in respect to the constant, unwavering, infinitely *kind government of them by their heavenly Father*, both in the restraints of His providence and in the constrainings of His love. And since He has promised it, they may be fully persuaded that they are "partakers of the Holy Ghost," "partakers of His holiness," *partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*"

How, then, should it appear strange to them that they may be "*wholly sanctified* in body, soul, and Spirit ; and *preserved blameless* unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." "*Faithful* is He that calleth them, *who also will do it.*" Up from your doubts, Christian. You have all this in Christ. These gifts are the purchase of His blood and the work of His Holy Spirit. "As thou hast believed," as you now believe, so be it done unto thee. Rest assured of this, that His word shall never fail thee, in gracious effects upon thy soul, or in full provision for any want of thy renewed nature. All this thou hast in Jesus Christ. The half has not been told thee of thy present riches, of a perfect inheritance in Him. Look to Him for all, and all is thine.

Fifth. Let the love-power be in full force. It

is infinitely better than the will-power. Though the Marthas may have something to say of its position in the present time (and these Marthas may be very dear people to Jesus), yet in the end it shall be seen that Mary's spirit, her quiet demeanor, her gentle sympathy with Jesus in the persons of His poor, and the sweetness of her speech in all her exhortations and didactics, will have accomplished much more to the glory of the Lord. Let us all be Marys.

Love is a shining grace. Its supremacy in the soul banishes all things that offend. You cannot make it. The Holy Ghost produces it with divine energy. Its fruit, therefore, is known, and well known. Where it exists people do not live in selfishness, in wantonness, in carelessness of their neighbors, in forgetfulness of the salvation of souls. For not only its pattern, its very life is in Him who by love left the glories of the throne to work out its saving power for a lost race. All the marks of love predominate. It is not dependent on other graces. It is the royal grace, which moves and sways the other graces and directs all motions of the man. In souls that are truly born again the motions of love may be expected to predominate—

1. In the God-ward tendency of the whole man. The law has two tables. The first directs our loving zeal whence all goodness flows. And this is according to the law of goodness itself. God

knows that we cannot truly, or properly, or extensively, and unselfishly love our brother man, and thus keep the second table of the law, unless we sincerely and with devotion love Himself, and thus keep the first table. Therefore God says, "love me first and love me best." Hence it is safely affirmed that we cannot feel true love for our fellow-man when the love of God is absent. And hence we look in the lives of Christians for bright, glowing, substantial love for God. And we always find it in those who are truly born again. Their new life is one of deep-seated love for God — this its distinction; its supreme attraction to Him; and to all its companions.

2. In addition to this is its man-ward action. It is not a vague, philosophic, self-saving machinery for moral display, but a heavenly flow of holy sympathy in all that elevates man by glorifying God. You may do much without possessing charity. They have been known who, to use the Apostle's figure, have spoken "with the tongues of men and of angels;" but they have been but "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals." A very little done with this holy grace will be vastly greater than thousands of mingled deeds in its semblance. Though a royal grace, it is not lofty. It seeks no titles, and gladly buries all high-sounding names. And consequently in return the world often buries this grace.

The first item in Paul's description of it pronounces its doom from the worldly code. "Charity suffereth long and is kind." That is not the way of men. The heavenly minded cover multitudes of sins. They carry a cloak for the sins of others, not for their own. But this cloak they carry for the sins of others is not a bareworn coat, that doth cost them little. It is the costliest of all garments. They serve not the Lord with that which doth cost them nothing. It costs them more than gold. Charity suffereth long, and is kind.

With whom does it suffer long, and to whom is it kind? Is it with its companions on the way to heaven, with souls in a holy exchange of thoughts and powers and riches of eternity? Nay, with its enemies, with its persecutors, with the malicious, with the self-willed, with egotistical and pharisaical venders of a mock humility. If you have this grace, and have been deeply wronged, and violently persecuted, it will shine the brighter amid the keener cuts and swifter darts of even a refined cruelty. Nor will it put up its injuries for a future day. Though it were wounded in its tenderest part, though the very exercise of its sweetness, is repaid with insinuations, with threats, with open violence, "it suffereth long, and is kind." It is kind with a holy sympathy for the wants, and woes, and failings of a poor and uninstructed soul. Yes, that is Christian charity! Which pleads with God

for the soul of its fiercest enemy, and seeks his good, even when affiliation, from the very nature of the case, is impossible.

How sweet were this charity to overspread the whole extent of the professing Church of Jesus Christ our Lord! Annihilating confessions of many besetting sins, of unholy jealousies, and jealousies in the high places of Zion, would be no more; and not only in the inner consciousness, but in the usual arrangements of the Church, in its external and internal working on every hand, would be seen the plain indications of the Lord's presence, and the holy joy of a heaven begun.

Beloved, it is possible. Every saint may not only hope for, but may now have that love which "is the fulfilling of the law." It is very largely included in the holy promises of our Covenant-keeping God. The possibility of its attainment is seen in the promise of the Holy Ghost, who is the living Author of the heavenly flame. The Holy Ghost is the very life and self of Jesus in the Church. Jesus said, "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him." (John xiv. 21.) Now the Lord does not manifest Himself *to* any one without manifesting Himself *in* him. He, therefore, who gets the Holy Ghost, may have, ought to have, by very simple faith, this holy, self-abnegating love shed abroad in his soul.

There are three words of Scripture in this connection, of great force in the encouragement of those who desire God's marvellous work in their souls. Let none say "it cannot be done," "it is not for me," "it belongs to those who have made greater advances in the divine life." For it belongs, by divine decree, promise, oath, and pledge, to those in whose hearts He "hath begun a good work."

Struggling Christian, I call your attention to these three words which will assure you that you cannot do the work, and must only believe. "*Will do it.*" Who will do it? "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." He will do it. He that calleth you, "He that hath promised." He that "is faithful." He that is "able also to perform." "He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth." He "will do it." This promise is wonderfully illuminated by its connection with the personal promise of the "Author and Finisher of our faith." "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." Now the Great Promise of Jesus during His earthly life was the promise of the Holy Ghost. In His presence with the Gospel Church are fulfilled all promises of spiritual enlargement to His earthly "house." By the Holy Ghost "He

will make a way to escape." "He will stablish you and keep you from evil."

But behold the open door to all His holy promises, in the manifest fact that *He will do what He is able to do*, for all who believe on Him. Do not our hearts burn within us, beloved, while He opens to us the Scriptures? You have often, it may be, regarded the love of which we have been writing, as a possession out of your reach. But if it be *an inworking* by a power outside of you, if (being utterly unable to do it yourself), you trust that power, which is infinitely willing, by His own recorded promises, to do what He is able to do to meet your spiritual wants, do you not see that by His *unrivalled* presence in your heart you will, you must, be filled with His love? Yea, unspeakably filled?

My precious brother or sister in this heavenly life, doubt no more. "*He is able*," "He is willing," "*He will do it*." What! will *He* fill your body with bread, and not your soul with love? Away with the wicked thought of His unwillingness to meet the farthest reach of our desires according to our capacity. He has "not brought us thus far to put us to shame," nor has the blessed Holy Ghost awakened desires which cannot be gratified.

Now then, in respect to this divine charity, which if a man have he will possess every other grace, let me say to the Christian — *Expect to be*

filled with it. Set your mark high as the promise. "Be *not* filled with wine wherein is excess, but *be filled* with the Spirit." Do not say to me — "when I die." *While you live*, be filled with the Spirit. It is a fearful thing to think that God will not wholly sanctify us till we die, for that begets unbelief in the power and willingness of God to make us walk in his *marvellous light*, while the promise and the fact of living in such light are clearly stated in the Word of God. That is adding to and taking from the Word of God with fearful "wages." Let us then be filled with love.

"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." That is the secret of all power and of all confidence. It saves us from shame in cross-bearing, and is the inward basis of that statement of holy philosophy — "we glory in tribulations also ; knowing that tribulation worketh patience ; and patience, experience ; and experience, hope ; and hope maketh not ashamed." This is thy blessedness, O Christian ! to be such an one as is described by the word, Love, to the extent of your present capacities. Now, then, do not go to the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians to see how well you will look when this grace fills your heart and life. But go at once to Him who "*will do it*," will create, energize, increase it, sustain it in your heart. With an unreserved consecration first made *so that you can*

believe, trust God to fill you with Himself. Consecration of all you have and are, or hope to have or to be, takes away the stones from the highway over which the King is to pass, and thus His way is prepared to fill your heart with Himself.

Beloved people of our God, will you not be filled with love? Will you not enter that happy estate which is called "heaven below," and which many testify is their present portion? "*He will do it—*" how ungrateful to criticize the promise, the fact, the manner of His working, or to smile as Sarah did at the wonder which was presented to her. "No, far be it from me," you say. "He shall do all His pleasure, He shall enter my heart and sup with me, and I with Him." And so, love, which is "the fulfilling of the law," shall reign within and upon you. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in Him."

Sixth. Beloved, who have entered into this rest of Sanctification by faith, we are leading a *Hidden Life*. Let it be *always* so. For He is "able to keep us from falling."

Intermissions of happy experience have been so much the rule and the expectation, that among many, faith for a full and present salvation has been made void, and the promises of none or of little effect. These intermissions, when the "wretched man" experience is in the ascendancy, are opposed to the genius of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The true expression of gospel grace in the life of a believer is that of spiritual joy, comfort, blessedness. For he is a new creature, changed from the old. He is a holy person as washed by the Blood, and attended by the Spirit of the Lord.

He is made a new creature for a new Hiding-Place. He has been redeemed that he may be the Lord's and may live in the Lord. The Lord is his house. "The Lord is my habitation, whereunto I continually resort." Before he is fit for this royal dwelling, he must be washed ; so the Lord has provided a fountain to wash in, that we may abide in the Palace of the Lord's presence. *And this is our distinction.* We live in the best part of the universe, and have the best house in the universe. How little the worldly nobles in wealth and outward estate know of our riches, and our glory, and our eternity ! They may think we are poor, *but we know that we are rich.* They may think it a poor house we are living in, but we know that marble or brown-stone is not of any consequence to us—our earthly residence is only a temporary shell. It is not our home. We have a house compared with which the most costly and extensive and noblest structures on earth are but as hovels. Our house is where our citizenship is, whence our conversation is. The earthly dwelling only our lodging-place on missionary ground ; the life-home

unseen, unreachd by fire, or sword, or any danger.

Could others see the grandeur of our life, and its home, its eternal destiny, its ineffable bliss, they would be filled with the utmost dismay in the midst of their marble palaces with all their plenty ; they would seek to exchange all they have for our Portion. How blind they must be to think for a moment that it would be a poor exchange ! Their house can pass from them, ours cannot pass from us. They can and must pass away from their place, but we are firmly fixed. Theirs can be bought with a price which men can earn ; the price of ours was only devised in the councils of eternity, and only paid with the most costly gift of the Author of the universe. Theirs is a place the like of which can be found, perhaps better — some may even desire to improve their surroundings by removal ; but the like of our house cannot be seen ; nor is there any desire to leave it. While men can easily and soon become well acquainted with their most intricate palaces, ours will take eternity to study upon with ever-increasing delight, in view of Its amplitude, Its security, Its exceeding great glory. For the richest palaces of men were made with hands, but ours was never made ; It never had a beginning, and shall never have an end. These are not fancies. They are solid truths, on which our souls feed with inexpressible delight. While our riches and our

hopes are described as the most exalted that an intelligent being could desire, it is a very present comfort that the description is in such language as both large and small capacities can accept as statements of fact. But to the praise of God's grace it must be spoken, that our eyes have been opened to see these things, else we should not have seen them to this day.

It is our blessedness to see a fact in words like these: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Now if the body lose its head it loses its life. Christ is our Head, and therefore "our life." We have life because we are united to a living Head. Our eternal life is in Him. This blessed Jesus once came down to be handled by cruel men, but now He liveth, and none can do anything but to submit to Him or be ground to powder. He is to destroy all enemies under His feet. If our life is precious to Him—and it is, for He thinks enough of it to hide it in Himself and keep it for Himself—then none can ever reach it to mar it. For He is in the Godhead. Satan might try to get a creature, he might hope to secure an archangel, to raise a rebellion once among His equals, but the swift power of Jehovah hurled him into fearful perdition. And our Jehovah Jesus tried him even when He Himself had taken up with the feeble tabernacle of a man. He conquered him by a process which we cannot fully comprehend. Beloved, our life is hid

in Jehovah Jesus ! It is hid with Him in the God-head !

Our life being hidden includes its secrecy. Others may tell us that it is not there ; some may profess to doubt whether there be any such life, or any such residence for it. *We know* that it is there. It is a precious secret with us. The secret is threefold : 1st. We know for ourselves that *He gave us* our new life. We have been filled with praise ever since, for most of us can tell when we received the precious boon. 2d. We know that *we now have* the life, and that we have abundance. Let men and devils deride us, let them persecute us, let them "say all manner of evil against us falsely," we know that we are now living in the Lord. 3d. We know that our life in Jesus, *He Himself is keeping*, that we may enjoy it forever with Him in glory. We know this because He has said it, and because our enjoyment of His keeping it is greater than could reach us by any other possibility.

Our life, then, is one which is kept in precious secret ; not indeed so that others cannot see it if they will (for the fruit of holiness must be apparent) ; but some hate it, and call it evil ; from their rude touch our life is so secret, that they can never produce a ripple on the calm sea of our confidence. Beloved, do I not speak to them that know the Gospel ? Do you not know that your life is hidden

in God? Yes, blessed be His glorious name. We know it by the life-giving streams which come from our living Head, by the soul satisfaction of His presence with us continually, and by the "hidden manna" which He hath already supplied.

That is a good hiding-place which Satan cannot find. He knows every nook and corner where men lay away their choicest treasures, but into this hiding-place he cannot come, nor can he find it. And if he cannot find it with all his malicious cunning who or what else can? Our security may be most profound. "Let us not cast away our confidence." Now we have sweet rest in our abiding-place. What disease shall we fear? What years of gloom shall we fear? What losses shall we fear? Does not Jesus own the body? Does not Jesus own our future time? Does not Jesus own our estate? If our life is hid in Him, are not all these under His headship?

Beloved children of the Most High, time was when I used to fear disease, and gloom, and loss, and littleness. But after preaching in such unworthy impressions for thirteen years, the gracious Master showed me where my life was hidden, and I said, "Jesus, these are thy concerns; I yield all to Thee — my life, my expectations, my darlings, my all, past, present, and future." Then began my rest. It was a rest from the care of all things which had given me trouble outside of my Hiding-

Place. The Divine Teacher of my happy Dwelling showed me things unknown before, *e.g.*, how I could be saved from sins which had troubled me until I began to think either that the grace of God was surprisingly inefficient for the work of my transformation, or that I had never known the grace of God at all. The latter I could not believe. The former was a gnawing worm. In my precious Hiding-Place, I find the Blessed Master taking all care away from me. He assured me that He would destroy these works of the Devil in me, and He did; so that, from the poor, fearing, discouraged soul I once was, I became rich, and believing, and resting. I found out that my sanctification was in the Blood and Spirit, and not at all in my own efforts. It has been sweet indeed to let Him do this work for me, while my all absorbing enjoyment has been to be hid in Jesus and see His wonder-working. The years which have followed have been "heaven begun below." God knoweth the truth of what I write, and He knoweth that I write it but to tell of all His wondrous works. You know He says to us, "Ye are my witnesses."

With what delight the Church may live this hidden-life! Far from the world, and near to God. Far from self, in God. Far from struggling to carry the work of God along, and to carry self along with it, "resting from our own works as God

did from His!" This is the way that God has provided for His dear people to live, and it is the only way that becomes them. They are children of a king—it is proper that they should live a life entirely beyond the comprehension of those who have nothing to do with royalty, beyond the gaze of those who merely live upon the surface of things and in the present.

Christian, is this the life you lead? Do I hear the answer, "No, I wish I could have such an experience, but I have tried hard to enter, and cannot?" Then, dear one in the Lord, if you are sure that everything is laid upon the altar, it may be that you are waiting for appearances, or for further witness. *Wait for nothing; only believe.* Why should you wait for *appearances* of the heavenly life, when the Lord has assured you of it. If He says, "out of you shall flow rivers of living water"—if He says that upon our believing Him we should find rest unto our souls—*it must be so now with you. Do not wait to seek it; believe it.* In gospel language, seeing is believing; our eyes are called faith. How can we expect to see without believing; the appearance is not the witness of God. "*He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.*" How often we have said to poor struggling convicted sinners, "Do nothing—only believe"!

But, beloved Christian, struggling to enter into rest, the very instruction you have given to such is the great sign-board on all the way to the celestial city. "Do nothing — only believe." Believe that Jesus brings you where He said He would, believe you are in the place where He has made you desire to remain, believe that His exceeding great and precious promises *are* fulfilled, believe that He "worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure," and that mightily. According to your faith it shall be unto you. You shall indeed go in and out and find pasture.

Let it be your habit, dear saint of the Lord, since the Master Himself has hid your life, to *daily hide everything with Him*. This is the part of the work you are to do. Let everything have the mark of your habitation upon it. Call not yourself unclean, whom He has called and made holy, and let nothing be with you which will not have a full welcome into the King's Palace. With everything hidden there, you shall have no cares from outside ; and the cares of those inside are like the cares of Eden. They "are careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and thanksgiving they make their requests known unto God." They are all hard workers ; there is no idleness among the saints in the gardens which their Lord has given them to dress and to keep, but their spirits may be as quiet as the descending dews. Militant but

always victorious, always they "triumph in Christ," who "maketh manifest the savor of His knowledge by them in every place." FOR THEY ACT AND FIGHT, AND SPEAK FROM THEIR HIDING-PLACE.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THIS SUBJECT IN THE CASE
OF THE NOBLEMAN AND HIS SON.

John iv. 49, 50: "The nobleman saith unto Him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way."

This record is remarkable for two things: 1. The peculiar action of the Lord Jesus. 2. The simple faith of the nobleman. It matters not who he was. Some have thought he was Chuza, Herod's steward. Of course all attempts to get at certainty will consume our time away from the great thoughts that lie hid in the record. More than that, the effort would only chain us down to the letter, and thus keep us from the "Spirit which giveth life."

This man came to Jesus with importunity, and his words request haste, as though, if He did not come, the spark of life would be gone. We that have had our darlings laid thus low know something of the intense feeling with which he spoke. It was a last call for the life of his child. When

our lambs have been laid low, how we have prayed for them! This man knew that Jesus exercised healing power. He believed that He was an infallible Physician. Yes, he believed more. For he believed that the power of Jesus exerted from a distance was enough to cure this most desperate case of his son.

I. The Saviour's answer is to be first observed: "Go thy way; thy son liveth." The word is spoken as that of a commander over all forces and all distances. Jesus knew all about the son at a distance, and controlled all the forces in nature at that distance to the breaking of the fever at the very hour in which He spoke.

1. In this answer the compassionate Redeemer encouraged the faith of the multitude. He would show them how willing He was, and how able, to do even the difficult thing that was asked of Him. His short words were with power. A wave of gladness rolled over that multitude who had "come to hear Him, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities." They were at once emboldened to continue near Him. At once their doubts vanished, and they were glad to wait, and enjoy the wonderful works of God. One of them was saying to another, "Oh hear the dear man! He commands the disease at a distance. If He can heal this man's child, surely He can heal us and ours who stand in His presence."

Let us take the Redeemer's position. Stand always in an encouraging attitude toward those with whom we labor or among whom we live. Payson said, "The man who wants me is the man I want." Let all freely come to you. Open the heart of love, and let the disconsolate and the poor and needy in, to hear the words of life and comfort, and to receive out of your fulness the gift which God means you shall bestow. Jesus thus shows His compassion now. He does not ask any to believe without testimony. His witnesses are all abroad. These witnesses have a special commission to invite all to come to Him. There is nothing so well authenticated as His message; there is nothing so warm and hearty as His invitation; nothing so sure as His ability and willingness; nothing so fully set in the passage of time as His wonderworking fulfilment of all His promises; of the witnesses of His might, none so intelligent, none so happy and glad to testify of His power to save "to the uttermost."

Ye that have anything to do in yourselves or your families which requires more than man, come freely unto Jesus Christ. As He encouraged these Galileans, so He has encouraged you to come. Come and ask His love. Come and ask, *first of all*, ask Himself. For if He dwell within you, you shall know what to ask of Him further, and you

shall know that whatsoever you ask according to His will He heareth you."

2. In this answer, see Who we have to trust. He appeared a man of sorrows. Very possibly upon the look of His face there was an appearance of deep thought. But He commanded winds, and sea, and devils, and diseases, and they obeyed Him. He knew all things. They never uttered a subject but He was fully conversant with it, and overcame them with the fulness of His answers. They thought themselves wise in their undeveloped and foolish science. He knew all the then unwritten and the yet unwritten books. He knew the earth was round, but if He had said it they would have made it a special accusation against Him, and would have made it a ground of His crucifixion, though now our babes know it. Here He commanded the influences about this child at a distance, and He knew them. Nor was it with Him a vision, for as it is written, "He knew all things." The deep passages of science which in their turn have entranced the greatest minds were altogether known unto Him. For He laid the foundations of the earth, and in thought and being travelled the fields of illimitable space; in thought, I say, as a man, in Being as God. To Him all the philosophers of the ages were but as babes.

Oh how glad I am that my precious Jesus did not put His ministers to the task of assigning Him

a place, or as one says, "elaborating a theory respecting the personal rank of their Master in the scale of being. On the contrary He Himself persistently asserts the real character of His position relatively to God and man, and of His consequent claims upon the thought and heart of mankind. Whether He employs metaphor or plain assertion, His meaning is too clear to be mistaken. He speaks of Himself as the Light of a darkened world, as the Way by which man may ascend to heaven, as the Truth which can really satisfy the cravings of the soul, as the Life which must be imparted to all who would *live in very deed*, to all who would really live forever. Life is *resident in Him* in virtue of an undefined and eternal communication of it from the Father. He is the 'Bread of Life.' He points to a living water of the Spirit *which he can* give, and which can quench the thirst of souls that drink it. *He is in Himself* the one Good Shepherd of the souls of men. He is the Vine, the Life-Tree of regenerate humanity. He *claims to be* Lord of the realm of death. He will *Himself* wake the sleeping dead. He will *raise Himself* from the dead. He encourages men to *trust Him as they trust God*; to honor Him as they honor the Father" (*Liddon's Bampton Lectures.*)

His commandments are to be obeyed *as those that were uttered from Sinai.*

This gracious, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient Redeemer does not need from my hands the assertion of any theory respecting His power to save. My soul rests on Him as in His word presented—my Lord, my Life, my Jehovah-Jesus. Ah what power there is in His Word! “Go thy way; thy son liveth.” As a word of knowledge, He knew that the fever broke at His word; as a word of power, He did it. He commanded, and the sick body of the child stood firm in life. Ye dear and precious readers, do you know what a Lord you have? and do you believe Him as such?

Let us take example from this nobleman. This was only the second recorded miracle; yet this man acted as if he had heard of many. We have heard and we have seen many. *How many* miracles of grace we have seen! what miracles of grace we are! Therefore let us consider —

II. The simple faith of this nobleman.

1. He took Jesus at His word. “Go thy way: thy son liveth; and the man believed the word that Jesus spake to him, and he went his way.” How refreshing to see a man take Jesus just as He said! Men are sometimes very tender upon this point. But they are not tender for the name of Jesus. They do not like their own truthfulness questioned, but they are very far from taking Jesus at His word. But this man made not a single question. It was an instant faith.

He rested on the word which Jesus had spoken, as though it were the Rock of Truth. And so it was. The Word of the Lord was and is the most solid of all things, for His Word made all things. There is nothing so real as the Word of God. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."

Therefore, if Jesus has spoken anything, you have no right to doubt it. If Jesus says, "He that believeth shall be saved," then, believing soul, you have no right to doubt your salvation. I am met here with the answer, "I do not doubt my Saviour, but I doubt myself." That is right, beloved; then you must believe you are saved. "No, I'm afraid I don't believe." Well, beloved, who then can only remedy that evil? Jesus — He alone. Now, has He not said, "Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out?" Him that cometh for what? Why, to get all these things, these fruits of the Spirit, these greatest treasures God has to give. Have you come to Jesus? Then, if you do not doubt Him, you do believe He receives you, and that He gives His Holy Spirit to you, and that The Gracious Spirit works faith in you.

FAITH IS BEFORE AND ABOVE ALL WORKS.

1. A work-religion always has failed, and always will fail. It failed in the garden of Eden, even where Adam had all power to serve God. It is not

strange, therefore, that in this day we should find that works will not comfort in the great emergencies of life ; for God has said "BELIEVE." That is God's order for every one.

First, the kingdom of God and His righteousness, is to be received by faith.

1st. For all new converts to the religion ; believing before baptism, aye, believing before pleasing God. "*What ! should I not try to please God ?*" This is pleasing to God — *the work of God, the way of God* — "*That ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.*"

This has been needful in every case, and in every true case of faith must have been observed. Abraham did not go up Mount Moriah in obedience to the command before he believed. It would then have been a sad journey, and his answer to Isaac about the sacrificial lamb would have been spoken in indescribable agony. *He went up believing* ; and so his obedience was that of a child, a comfortable obedience.

2. There is therefore a reasonableness about this order of God. Faith must be first for the comfort of the worker, and for his security. (1) For his *comfort*, so that the doings of his life may wear the aspect and be really the work of a loving child. (2) And, beloved, faith preceding our work, is the only reasonable *security* we have. If Adam failed we shall, unless we have hold of The Al-

mighty. And it is the work of faith to take hold of Him. God says in His commandment, "Do this." Looking at our weakness, we should say, "Lord, it is utterly impossible to do it." But we remember at once, that believing is before doing ; and so we betake ourselves to the Fountain of eternal strength. We believe that He will enable us to perform. We do perform by faith. This is the only way to live according to the command. We have Christ now in the command. It is not a mere Mosaical precept, to be kept in mind by confessions of our inability to fulfil, and bloody sacrifices to remind us of the necessity of fulfilment.

Christ is "the end of The Law for righteousness" now. If we were left to fulfil it ourselves, we could not at all ; but if Jesus resides within, if He gives strength and life from the dead, it is full salvation. And so we now look, not to the commandment, that we may fulfil it ; but to Christ, that He may fulfil it in us. It is thus that faith secures us. Faith before obedience, secures obedience. Faith before doing, secures the power to will and to do, that we may stand complete in all the will of God. It is thus that faith secures us in a *present* salvation. To a soul that believes fully in The Word of the Lord, there is no need of absence from the body to enjoy heavenly things, and to live in the continuous enjoyment of them. For Faith receives, according to His promise, "*and grace for grace.*" The first

requisite, therefore, for a soul to *enjoy heaven below, to be secure and happy*, is Faith in God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

It may be seen in His own DESCRIPTIONS IN THE SIXTH OF MATTHEW.

“Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature.” All your work to that end will produce no result. God will see to it that we have the right stature. We *may believe for that*, we may rest in Him with confidence that our stature will best subserve the interests of His kingdom.

Again, “Why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin.” “If God so clothe the grass of the field . . . shall He not much more clothe you?” Then Jesus says, “*Take no thought*” about things to eat, and things to drink, and clothing. “Take no thought for the morrow.” Jesus does not say that a man should be idle, should not work. But above all your work He says, “*Believe.*” Do not have such a mistaken idea about God’s supply, as to suppose that your crowding care and anxiety and unrest are going to get it for you, or to help you labor for it. But first of all “Believe.” Seek the kingdom first [*i. e.* “believe”]. When you believe God, your labor will be without care. You will not labor as a slave to a certain end, the labor being the end of your enjoyment ; but you will labor with a happy prospect, assured that whether the

labor be much or little, profitable or unprofitable, the trade good or bad, our provisions are fixed, and our full supply, spiritual and temporal, as certain as the existence of God.

3. *The only bar to such an exalted enjoyment is unbelief.* Unbelief, which doubts the word and work and Person and relations of the Lord Jesus Christ to His Father, and to us. Unbelief puts the lie on God, and leads men therefore inevitably to sorrow and gloom, as it must and ought. Would you, then, commence any work? Do not begin to *do* before you *believe*; else by and by you shall, like Nebuchadnezzar, be saying in the pride of your heart, "Is not this the great thing which *I* have done?"

Would you commence any day aright, with the possibility and probability of pleasant and useful issues? Commence it believing. Look to God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and sweetly, believingly, unshrinkingly take His promises for the day, as the needs come and go, as the varying circumstances may require; *assured* (for simple faith is assurance) that His mighty hand shall work within you, around you, in the heavens over you, in the earth beneath you, in devils to restrain and to quench their darts, in men to conform them to His promises, in angels that their ministrations may be timely, in all elements, that wind and tide and weather may best subserve the plan by which He

condescends to make the most of your life. Oh ! believe. Only believe. Believe now. Keep on believing, that God will do as He said, and as these bird and lily lessons of Jesus in the Sixth of Matthew plainly promise. It is the only consistent action for Christians, and the opposite makes us too low for description. For who but devils would dare to put the lie on God ?

The great error of poor fallen humanity is anticipation. Not the anticipation of faith, but of works, and of sense, and of earthly powers. In fact, faith has no anticipations that engage the will of the creature. It has enjoyments which are like in kind to those which shall be hereafter. But it knows nothing of calculating the future, save to leave it to Him Who controls.

Men of this world — how universally ! — anticipate the fruitage of plans, and of confidence in men, and of stratagem. They build airy castles, which, as they have nothing more to support them than air, require no more than a single breath to dash their fair proportions into oblivion. Many a man is waiting impatiently for an estate ; and sometimes waiting in an extravagant disappointment that some one does not die, whose life is the only hindrance to his own possession of a fortune. Chancery swallows many a hope thus founded on the sand.

There are fond mothers and fathers to-day who are sowing the seeds of bitter disappointment for •

the future. They are clinging to their darlings as though they would live forever. They look with fondness upon the face, they stop to admire the step, the beauty, and grace of their own offspring, as if calculating upon the rich payment they shall have by and by for all their toil and care. Ah! they have brought up children for themselves, and by and by God may claim them. But then the war will commence. "That child was mine," shall say the disappointed parents; "why should the Almighty rob me of my pet lamb?" "Nay," shall God answer their helpless disappointment. "Ye knew the child was lent — was mine, and ye anticipated your own schemes in its life. I, the Lord, have taken no more than was my own. If such airy castle-builders had only proceeded on the plan of faith — if they had believed God would do best, and brought and consecrated their all and their darlings to God, their whole course of action would have been changed, and the fearful falling out with God and His ways could never have occurred.

But some parent or possessor of dear treasures tells me, "I cannot believe — I cannot let the future thus alone; that would be unearthly. I cannot; do not ask me so unreasonably to believe." Beloved, if you cannot thus believe, there is something in the way. You are not in a condition to believe, and your unfitness is for your own remedy. It is a pharisaical difficulty. It is the boon of self

that must be thrown away, and self laid on the altar of the Lord. The Pharisees could not believe, because they "received honor one of another." They selfishly attended to their own honor, as many unbelievers selfishly calculate upon their treasures. Let that which is in the way of simple faith therefore be laid down at Jesus' feet. *Yea, your all. You are too rich if you own anything which is not specifically given to Jesus.*

THE PRIMARY IDEA OF FAITH IS THAT WE HAVE NOTHING, AND THAT WE CAN DO NOTHING.

I. *We cannot do anything* to please God. Every attempt at pleasing God will be a failure without faith. So God says. We cannot think a good thought, for our minds are corrupted by sin. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? What pure thoughts can come from an impure mind? As well expect a draught of sweet water from a bitter fountain.

They do tell us of unregenerated persons who are noble, disinterested, and who are exceptions to what we say. I answer that I have never been able, and hope never to be able, to resist the wisdom of God. He says, "Without Me ye can do nothing." And therefore I conclude that a Christless soul, however he may please men, cannot please God, and that all his thoughts will be found in some way mingled with self and sin.

And if we cannot think a good thought, of course we cannot do a good act; that is, an act which will please God. We may build palaces which in their proportions will be matchless. We may set steamers of incomparable beauty, safety, and speed upon all waters; we may charm society with our music, may hold vast numbers upon the gaze at our flights of eloquence; may hide religion in the dazzling glow of our external morality, and yet be utterly unable to please the eternal God. He says so. "Without faith it is *impossible to please God*." "The carnal [*i. e.*, the Christless] mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." *Vain man, empty mind*, to stand before God without the love of Christ, and expect to think, or say, or do anything which can merit the favor of God, or in full or in part pay for salvation! Such people are trusting in refuges of lies. God's Word declares it, and woe to the minister who lets down the truth which is built upon the Rock of Ages. *As we can do nothing to merit salvation, therefore let us try to do nothing to merit salvation, but only believe, "looking unto Jesus."*

BELOVED FRIENDS, WE ARE AS POOR AS POOR
CAN BE.

2. *We have nothing.* It is the only calculation of true faith. We do not come to the throne in

any partnership with "Laodicean spirits." To the Church of Laodicea God said, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

The plan on which we go to buy gold and raiment of God is not on the humanitarian line, but on that of the poor. By nature men are nothing short of beggars of God, though His bounty makes them princes. "Come and buy wine and milk *without money and without price.*" Come and have it for nothing because of your deep poverty. My dying reader, Jesus takes us in a very reduced condition. All the strength of our original constitution is sapped, all our beauty is fled. What few fragments of righteousness are held is but "filthy rags."

Men put the lie on this, but they are helpless after all. For however they awhile may build house to house, and multiply field to field, the time must soon come — soon as a weaver's shuttle — when no art, nor wisdom, nor device can save the body from a decaying heap of bones, and the beautiful, intelligent human face from its skeleton skull.

“Whose, then, shall these things be which thou possessest?” Ah, poor man, thou hast nothing!

And of time what hast thou, but that which can be placed upon the point of a cambric needle? Only the present passing moment. The dreams of the future are nothing but idle plays of fancy. *We have no future.*

And here is one secret of the riches of faith. IT HAS NO FUTURE. GOD IS ITS FUTURE. Since we can do nothing, and since we have nothing with which to please God, faith receives salvation as a free gift. And as the gift is coming through passing time, it receives it by the moment. *God's gifts are moment by moment to believers.* The living Christian, then, lives only at one point of time — *the present moment.* His is not the error of anticipating.

“To-morrow, Lord, is thine,
Lodged in thy Sovereign hand,
And if its sun arise and shine
It shines by thy command.”

Men think it great poverty to be reduced to a single moment; but it is really exceeding great riches. It is the true position of a dying man in contradistinction from a false and untrue view of life.

Let us look at the comfort of having no future. When we have given up all the future to God (for this is what I mean), all hopes of the future are laid

up in God ; we have no hopes outside of God's will, and, THEREFORE, WE CANNOT BE DISAPPOINTED. That is the greatest of all human blessings. Freedom from disappointment is greater riches than the possession of worlds. Disappointment is heart-ache, heart-sickness ; but the waiting for the Lord's future is blessedness. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." When God has our future, we have no plans to fail, no schemes to put through on an independent line of our own will, but are supremely satisfied with God's ordering of our life. I do not mean that there are no pangs. It is blessed to have God so order the pangs that are consequent upon our earthly lot, that we know infallibly that each one of them is in its best time for the development of our glory in Christ Jesus. And there is a rest in the will of God supremely sweet.

I do not mean that such living Christians cease to exert mental and manual skill. I do not mean that there are no Christian inventors — none who plan for the prosperity, happiness, usefulness of our race. Not at all. These very men who yield their all and their future to God may be the best of bank-directors, steamship builders and controllers, presidents, governors, senators. I have yet to learn that a saintly man is unable to keep a driving busi-

ness for God ; to make money for God, to build houses for God, plant fields, cut down forests, settle communities, make history, AND ALL FOR GOD AND HIS CHRIST. When all have a pious regard and delight in the will of God, and have laid up their own future in God, we shall have safer banks, and safer buildings, more reliable ocean travel, and better public men. *Because they will all be unselfish, and sweetly set in the will of God ;* rulers and people walking together in the fear of God, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. They will leave their employment at the will of God for other, abler, or for God's chosen hands.

That is what men need. For when the future is all given up — the last strand of earthly holdings broken — we are on full sail for the heavenly land under heavenly breezes. No more fears of the future, fears of poverty, of sickness, of failure, of sorrow. *Fears all gone.* “Perfect love casteth out fear.”

Beloved, we here see how *faith* in God, trust in Him, yielding up all to Him, *is the work of God.* If man would do that work, it must be by faith. THIS IS THE WORK OF GOD, THAT YE BELIEVE.

This simple faith is beautiful in the case of the nobleman. “The man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.”

I call your attention to —

THE NOBLEMAN'S EXAMPLE BEFORE THE MULTITUDE.

It was good. They saw a pattern for their own action. Jesus honored his faith, for this very occurrence has gone forth as an illustration of faith. Some mother, perhaps, had a babe there over whom she had nursed and watched with intensity ; she hears the nobleman's entreaty, she hears the answer of Jesus ; but never having seen Jesus do miracles, only having heard of one, she did not know His spirit. This nobleman's action makes her confident. The nobleman's quick relief in spirit taught her to receive the word of Jesus with the same confidence. Her own pleasure in anticipating the cure of her child approaches the enjoyment of the fact itself.

In like manner, beloved Christian, your hearty reception of Christ in all His offices, and your trusting, resting spirit, encourages every other Christian in the like trust. The opposite discourages weak souls, it gives slanderers room to talk and prate about what they will call the ineffectual grace of Christ, and stands as a dishonor in His Church.

The principal manner of Jesus' work now is in the dispensation of His grace. The action of true faith —

(1.) Is prompt, receiving the promises, enjoying

them ; not going about with a sad countenance. A sad countenance from any unsatisfied want in Jesus, is dishonoring to Him.

(2.) The action of true faith being prompt loses no time. It does not have to wait. It is ready for business, for true pleasure, or for death. As soon as this man had received his request of Jesus, he believed and went his way. He was ready for all his engagements.

In addition to the prompt faith, illustrated in the case of the nobleman, it were well to stop and ask the Gospel reader if we personally have not received a

“MINISTRY TO TESTIFY.”

Paul said he had a “ministry to testify.” “Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, *and the ministry, which I have received* of the Lord Jesus, *to testify* the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts xx. 24.) Shall anything keep us from this testimony? Yea, rather, shall not the greatness of our redemption raise us up to the third heaven of desire to declare the amazing grace? O Lord Jesus, lay the ministry to testify upon each one of thy saints, that we may tell the story with true effect.

We shall find that testimony is contagious. Some of you know a place (The Palmer Meeting) where the giving of testimony is like a silver

tide which rolls in glory over the people. You could scarcely weary in that place, for time is ended. Hours pass as moments, while the Lord's sweet little ones tell what He hath done for their souls. I would that every reader had the spirit of that meeting.

Now it is very true that all cannot preach, *but all can be witnesses*. Here is the glory of the gospel, that the poorest, the feeblest, the most illiterate of the flock may freely speak out of a shining heart. And their simplicity will often exceed the learning of the wise. Indeed, the wise can only give in this testimony as they become little ones. The worldly wise, the self-wise, have no such privilege. Their wisdom must all be laid at Jesus' feet, and they must be simple enough to let their hearts flow together with all the elect. When they all consent to become little and unknown, to let the Lord work in His own way with them, they may occupy the witness-stand ;—till then it is very little they can have to say among Christ's babes, for it is hard to talk out of an empty heart.

Beloved, I was brought up to preach, and I have in my measure followed my calling. I am perfectly willing that men should say my preaching ability is small, yet I have written many sermons with greatest care. And I have burned hundreds of those sermons up, because when I had written the sermons it was all I had to say ; out of the unstudied

+ What I say, he mean?

treasures of a heart filled with grace I did not have the wherewithal to bring up, and God's little ones must have wished and prayed for me to be one of their number. Now for the change. Rather than preach a sermon which will draw me the compliments of men, rather than be known as *the* preacher, I choose to be a simple witness of Christ's "uttermost" salvation. His uttermost salvation, the true cross-preaching, is solid, and infinitely beautiful, in the sight of the truly wise. *Yes, I would* rather be a simple witness in that little flock that gather at the Tuesday meeting, and at kindred places, than be the greatest preacher in the land. Such could preach great sermons, and die in his dignity. But I would rather die in the littleness of a babe resting on the bosom of infinite love, with the sweet story of the cross simply and alone coming out of my mouth to save and to bless men.

UP, DEAR SOULS ; YE CAN ALL BE WITNESSES. All of you that love Jesus can tell it, and that is the testimony which bears fruit. Those of you that desire to appear well in your speech *have not the uttermost story* to give. But those of you who are willing to be anything or *nothing* are ready to tell the story. The simple declaration, "I know that I love Jesus, and that He is my *present Saviour*," may, coming from some soul whom God has prepared to say it, prove of more power than many sermons. I speak that I do know.

Ah, then, it is objected, the testimony has to be prepared. Yes;—by the Lord in your heart. One man can say the words I have just written, and though in statement they be the cream of a Christian experience, yet they might fall like icebergs ; another would speak them, and they would seem to come from the opening of furnace doors which burn within sufficiently to impel vast machinery, and when open burn and glow upon those outside with amazing light and heat. What made the Samaritan woman's testimony so powerful was, that she had been talking with Jesus ; but if her mere presence with His humanity produced a crowd of suppliants and admirers, how much more when Jesus dwells within us ? Get Jesus enthroned, and you have light, and heat, and power which will compel a hearing, though you speak with greatest simplicity. Let me be plain. Do not leave it to guess-work that Jesus is your All and in all. Be sure that you love Jesus with intensely greater affection than you do your dearest earthly darling. Have it so though it should cost you as much as it would have cost the young man who went away sorrowing because he had great possessions. Be sure you have the one thing which he lacked. Let all go for Jesus, that He may have free scope in your heart in millennial sweetness, without any police. He does not want you to come to Him in such a way that you will be compelled to whip yourself up to His

service, or that your conscience or your will or a godless world will goad you to duty. He does not desire you to be needing close sermons that cut you in every quarter of your soul. He simply desires an empty heart that He may fill it, a will given up to Him that He may control it; and so shall your conscience, as a judge, have its millennium, its approving rest, in the peace among the community of your powers. Then, instead of needing close sermons, you will have a story to tell which shall be heard gladly by hungering souls, whose powers, both greater and less than your own, shall be united in His service. The Lion, and the Lamb together, and all the wild-beast spirits among men, shall help each other to testify to the wondrous work of God. The story these all tell is the God-prepared story of reigning, triumphant grace. Yes, beloved, let Jesus in fully, and then you will not only have to say, He told me all things that ever I did. Nay, nay; from the innermost temple of your soul you will say, He *telleth me all things that Himself doeth*," for He is my Friend, my

• Husband.

WITNESSES OF THE LORD.

It always was, now more than ever, a time to witness for Jesus. Every Christian, from the time of his regeneration, is a Heaven-appointed witness

of the Lord. The testimony is to be confined to no time or place, but universally given to the full extent of our ransomed powers. Our names, our business, our families, our conversation, our friendships, our associations, our possessions, are never to be allowed to dissociate us in any, the least way, from Christ. On the contrary, all these are to have the name of Christ burned upon them, and ineffaceably impressed, so that wherever these are known it shall be known that they are Christ's, and not ours. This will honor Christ, and our testimony shall be living light. Oh, beloved, does not your soul glow with great joy, and burn with fervent love, seeing that you may be a witness for Jesus, of His power to save ; of His fulness, of His great compassion, of His "grace abounding to the chief of sinners," of the hope which is an anchor to the soul, of the assurance of eternal life, of the ever-present Holy Spirit, His deep comforts and infallible directions through His Word? What an unutterable privilege ; what royal dignity, to be witnesses for the King of kings !

Now for the work ! What first shall be done ? Do you ask with strong desire ? Is it your soul's best work to

"CROWN HIM LORD OF ALL?"

First, then, see, dear fellow pilgrim to the "excellent glory," that He is crowned and triumphant

within you. Nothing can be done before this. Your powers are not ready until the name of Jesus is stamped upon them by His indwelling Spirit. Have it done, then, so that you are sure of it. Do not once attempt to hope that all is right, until you are sure that the Holy Ghost has sealed you. You will feel His work on your purposes, on your will, on your affections, on your thoughts. Then, as a fire in the bones, it will come out. Thought will be active, and will lend activity to speech. You will be decided when men oppose ; and the more you testify, the more will Jesus give you to feel supreme satisfaction with His work. Your testimony, though it be concerning what Jesus has done for you, will have very little self in it. It will be a hiding all self behind the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Words may be few — they will be spoken with a fearless independence ; they may be far from eloquent — they will tell upon the world. They may even seem to be lost ; it may appear to us that we are testifying here and there for nothing, but hereafter it shall appear that they have sprung up to the glory of God, and have not returned void.

One thing that the witness for Jesus should especially do is to lay aside all anxious care for results. He may look for results, but these do not spring up by His own hand. God will bless, but let him wait. For if over-anxious for results, he

may be misled to take that for a reward which is only temporary, and which will sadly disappoint him in a coming day. If we labor faithfully for Jesus, He will see to it that our labor is not in vain, will show us His own gracious encouragements, and at last, AT LAST, we "shall come again with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us." Said a man to one who was distributing tract cards, "Did you ever see any result of this labor from the thousands you have scattered?" "Only one," was the reply. But, beloved, if the thousands had not been scattered, that one would not have been gathered. That one paid for thousands upon thousands more.

Thousands of tongues, millions of words, years of trial for Jesus' sake, no amount of toil or pain that we can endure for Him, will be too much. Glory be to His name. Let us be witnessing for Him in life, in service, in word, in prayer, in praise, in conference, in confession, everywhere, in season, out of season. Dearly beloved, let us be as firm, as clear, as pointed, as full in our testimony as though we felt ourselves in the article of death, and on the borders of the Heavenly Canaan.

CHRISTIAN, KEEP SOWING.

"Keep sowing." So said a Christian to a person who had given him a tract by which he had received spiritual benefit. The brother who gave the tract counts it a joy to tell every man, woman, and child

he meets, something about the Lord Jesus. The cars, the steamboat, the street, the store, the parlor, the sick room, the counting office, are the places which never fail to hear his voice; in whichsoever he may be. Many will meet him in the judgment, who will then remember the words of faithfulness he has spoken. It was doubtless a great encouragement to him, when a brother, who had been deeply moved by his words for Jesus, earnestly said, "Keep sowing, brother."

Christian, reader, are you daily and hourly sowing for Jesus? Do you belong to that company who go forth weeping and bearing precious seed, who shall doubtless "come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them?" Sow beside all waters, brother, sister of Jesus; not only where the soil looks good; for even there, there may not be much depth of earth. Sow everywhere the precious seed of divine truth, tell everywhere the power of the Blood of Jesus to save from hell and from sin.

But what is this sowing? The seed is the Word, but what is the sowing? The hand sows the natural seed into the earth; this sowing is done by the heart, and either the mouth or the hand may be its instrument. Then the great necessity is to have the heart full of the precious seed. The seed is the Word; but the memory may be full of the words of Scripture while the heart is quite empty of their love or of their spirit. How, then, shall we get the

heart full of these seeds? The soul of the writer is full while he thinks of the answer. Dear reader, the word is not only written in the Bible ; it is EMBODIED IN CHRIST. Get Jesus Christ, the Embodied Word, in your soul.

“Christ liveth in me,” said the holy apostle. When this is the happy fact, the soul understands the Scriptures, and has no need of the teachings of men. He feels the power of the heavenly seed. He feels the life of that energy which is to convert the world, if it be ever converted. The love of a present Jesus in the soul is like a fire within, which puts all the being in motion. It commands all the powers of the body, “so that they cannot do the things which they would” when swayed by the unregenerated will. Christ in the soul is an energizing Spirit. He is a commander of the powers for God. He takes away the love of the world, and of the flesh, and tears away the power of the devil. He illustrates the meaning, and makes manifest the fulness of the Scriptures in the knowledge of the things of God. He convinces that these contain the only way of salvation, and all that man can possibly need to bring him triumphantly to heaven, and to make him conqueror over sin this side the grave.

Christ Jesus, by His own spiritual indwelling causes the soul to feel and to know that divine, refreshment, holy courage, lively joy, and constant

energy, by which we may continually refresh, instruct, assist, incite, souls into the Kingdom of Heaven, or on their way to glory. Ministerial labor must be very distasteful work where Christ is not reigning in the heart. But let Christ be enthroned, let Him command all our powers, and the humblest of laymen shall be the Lord's prophet. Ministers who only preach in the pulpit never preach. Such cannot be a "flaming fire." But every one can be a flaming fire whose loving, living words for Jesus burn everywhere. When the heart is glowing with Christ, the Scriptures will be precious, and the words that come from the mouth will be the seed which He will use and approve.

Therefore, beloved lover of Jesus, keep sowing. Let the heart be a repository of the riches and the knowledge of Christ, and so let the mouth declare, exhort, praise, utter comforts to the afflicted, as the case may be. Do not merely ask, Where shall I go to declare this word? but do it wherever you are. Cards, tracts, books, may be given with the hands, but let the mouth be open for Christ. In any way, in every way, keep sowing the seed; the name, the will, the work, the blood of Jesus shall be precious seed unto life eternal. O wondrous grace, which permits poor worms to plant that which shall forever bloom in the world of fadeless joy! "Keep sowing," for you know not whether shall prosper, this or that; you know that those who are faithful

in this vineyard shall not lack a good harvest for the praise of our great Lord. Let us have no selfish desires for our own results — we shall be fully satisfied in the glory of Jesus Christ.

WE REST IN LABOR IN JESUS.

THE END.

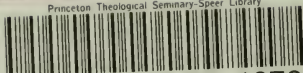








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